THE ODES OF PINDAR

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PINDAR

IN ENGLISH VERSE

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BY

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TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH VERSE OF HOMER'S ILIAD AND ODYSSEY,
THE GREEK DRAMATISTS, VIRGIL, LUCRETIUS,
HESIOD, SAPPHO, ETC.

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INTRODUCTION.

Though it is quite possible, and indeed probable, that the Epinician Odes do not represent Pindar's highest achievement in the realm of pure poetry, the student of history has every reason to be thankful that, of all his works, it is these that have escaped the ruin that has overtaken the rest. For they furnish us, perhaps more fully and more convincingly than any other remains of antiquity, with a solution of a problem which has troubled historians. Some of these have exclaimed against what they consider the narrow, short-sighted, parochial spirit of the Greeks generally, in failing to see that their material prosperity, their safety and true independence would be best secured, if not by frankly enrolling themselves under the hegemony of one strong state (preferably Athens), at least by a close federation as binding on each member as that of the United States of America. Still more writers have denounced what they consider the unpatriotic selfishness of the aristocratical party in the several states, their unscrupulous plottings and alliances with the enemies of their respective cities, and, when they gained the upper hand, their ruthless treatment of the democracies.

Does not Pindar furnish us with the key to this jealous isolation, by showing us how each city cherished a belief in its divine origin, how the first parent of each state, or its founder, was a divine being, whose very name it perpetuated—for in Pindar the name of the goddess-founder and

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that of the state are interchangeable—Thebe, Aegina, Cyrene ; or how its founders were demigods who settled there in obedience to divine commands ? To subordinate this heavenly guardianship to other powers might well seem sacrilege. And the tradition of the sacredness of an independence thus hallowed, when once established, might well survive the age of unquestioning faith.

For the families of the aristocracy, to whom a thousand memories called far more powerfully and insistently than to any other order of nobility in the world's history, there were incentives to political exclusiveness whose cogency we cannot appreciate unless we take the Olympian hierarchy as seriously as Pindar did. The *chronique scandaleuse* of Olympus, which shocked Plato, inspired Pindar. While repudiating belief in anything derogatory to the Gods, he does not consider their amours with mortal women (or even their pæderasty) in that light. The men whose praises he sang had in their veins the blood of Gods : their human ancestors were half divine, and their achievements were worthy of their high descent. The sons of the great houses whose lineage was from Herakles, Aeacus, Perseus, counted themselves of different clay from the common herd : they recognised in their hearts that they owed no duty to a democratic constitution : they never ceased to chafe under the yoke of equality with beings whom they held scarce fit to be their servants, and to intrigue against a system which placed their personal liberty at the mercy of the caprice of the " base," and allowed their wealth to be exploited for purposes with which they had no sympathy. No wonder that they accepted with complacency the poet's digressions into the old heroic myths that to us are but fairy tales : for them these were unassailable fact. Their records in song were the charter of their superiority to the world around them, of their right divine to govern their fellow-men.

It must also be remembered that these high-born men were superior to the lower classes not only in pride of lineage, but they bore about with them the witness to this in their bodily development. The aristocrat was a stronger man, and far more skilled in the use of that strength for personal encounters than the average democrat. He was a man of leisure, and we may say that practically all such men made it their aim, their daily practice, to perfect their physical condition in the gymnasiums which were in every town. In many states, perhaps in all which belonged to the Peloponnesian League, a small organized body of aristocrats kept the far more numerous commonalty in subjection, solely by their fighting superiority.[1] We must not lose sight of the transcendent importance of bodily vigour in an age when all fighting was hand-to-hand, and where the numbers on each side were so small that a few abnormally strong men might, by breaking the enemies' line, decide the issue. Each successful champion in the great athletic contests means a large number of men who went through a course of training in which they were wrought up to the highest pitch of perfection not only of muscular development, but also of pluck and endurance.

Among reasons which have been assigned for the discursiveness of these triumphal odes, in which a very small space is given to the victor, and none to the details of the contest, perhaps the most important was this: excessive praise was universally regarded as mischievous to its objects, as tending directly to provoke the jealousy of the Gods, and to invite their nemesis. In the mouth of an enemy it was malicious, tactless

1. Cf. the speech of Brasidas to his soldiers: 'You are not to be cowed by any numerical superiority of your foes, since you do not come from states in which such a lesson is learnt. You come from those in which the masses do not lord it over the select few, but where the minority rule the majority—a supremacy which they acquired by nothing save fighting superiority.'—*Thucydides*, IV, 126.

in that of a friend. Hence the praise in an ode was distributed widely: the bard celebrated the champion, his family, former victors, the city or island of his birth, his ancestors, the ancient heroes of the land, so that the φθόνος might fall heavily on none, especially as all success was ascribed to the Gods, to whom the competitors sacrificed before engaging in the contest. A religious halo surrounded the Great Games. "Not unto us" is the burden of more than one ode, in which success is expressly attributed to the help of a God, as Poseidon, and often to the Graces.

A feature of the Games which strikes us moderns unpleasantly is the absence among the Greeks of what we call the sporting spirit. While no praise was too high, no reward too splendid for the victor, his unsuccessful competitors neither expected nor obtained any sympathy even from their fellow-townsmen. Even the victor was sometimes assailed by envious disparagement, especially where a state was rent by political factions; while the vanquished had to hide his head from the storm of derision which greeted his failure.

ODES OF PINDAR.

THE OLYMPIAN ODES.

Olympian I.

For Hiero, ruler of Syracuse, on a victory won by his horse Pherenikus, 476 B.C.

(*Strophe* 1)

Chiefest is water of all things, for streaming
Therefrom all life and existence came;
And all proud treasure of princes the gleaming
Splendour of gold outshines, as the flame
Of a great fire flings through the night its rays.
But, heart of mine, if thou fain wouldst praise
Triumphs in athlete-contests won,
Search not, when day with his glory is glowing,
For a radiant star more life-bestowing
In the whole void sky, than the kingly sun.
Even so shall we find no brighter crown
Than Olympia giveth whereof to sing;
For thence doth the chant of high renown
O'er the spirits of bards its perfume fling,
When, the praise of Kronion in song resounding,
Unto Hiero's blest hearth wealth-abounding
The hymn of his praise they bring.

(*Antistrophe* 1)

Hiero!—yea, for the rod of his power
Is a sceptre of righteousness stretched o'er the land

Of the myriad flocks ; and the choice of the flower
Of chivalry ever is plucked by his hand.
Yea, and he also is garlanded
With the blossom of song enstarring his head,
The song that with gladsome voices now
We singers chant, at the banquet meeting
Of the Prince who giveth us friendship's greeting.
Now, O my Muse, from its rest take thou
The lyre that is strung to the Dorian strain,
If the glory of fleet Pherenikus, he
Who triumphed in Pisa's Olympian plain,
Haply with rapture of song thrilled thee,
When flashed in the course by Alpheus' river
His body by lash or by goad touched never,
And wedded to victory

(*Epode* 1)

His lord, the ruler of Syracuse-town,
The king who joyeth in gallant steeds.
Flasheth afar his name's renown,
Flasheth from Sicily far oversea
Where Pelops, the exile from Lydia's meads,
Founded a hero-colony—
Pelops, beloved of the Earth-enfolder,
Poseidon the strong, when the Fate of the Thread
Drew him resplendent with ivory shoulder
From the undefiled laver, whom men deemed dead.
There be marvels full many ; and fables hoary
With inventions manifold broidered o'er
Falsify legend, I wot, with a story
Wherein truth liveth no more.

(*Str.* 2)

But the Grace of Beauty, which aye is weaving
All manner of charm round the souls of men,
Taketh these tales unworthy believing,
And arrays them in honour : so cometh it then

That man with unwavering credence clings
To a false-feigned tale of impossible things.
But the after-days are the witnesses
That be wisest. Reverent speech beseemeth
The mortal who uttereth that which he deemeth
Of the Gods—so shall his reproach be less.
O Tantalus' son, I will speak not as they
Who told thy story in days of old!
But thy father bade thee a guest that day
To a banquet arrayed by the righteous-souled
Upon Sipylus' loved height—so he tendered
To the Gods requital for boons they had rendered.
On a sudden the chariot of gold
(*Ant.* 2)
Of the Lord of the Trident gleaming splendid,
Whose soul was with love for thy youth overcome,
Bare thee, as up through the blue ye ascended,
To imperial Zeus's glory-home,
Whither also came in the after-day
Ganymedes ravished from earth away
In halls celestial the nectar to pour.
But when viewless thus from the earth they had caught thee,
Nor the questers that far and near had sought thee
To the arms of thy mother could thee restore,
Then spake some neighbour in envious spite
A whispered slander of sin and shame,
How that over the boiling water's might
Which hissed in the bronze that bestrode the flame
Did they carve thy flesh with the knife, and seethe it,
And served at the feast, and—dare lips breathe it?—
That the God-guests ate of the same!
(*Ep.* 2)
But impossible is it for me to call
Any Blest One man-eater—with loathing and scorn
I recoil! O, the profit is passing small
That the dealer in slander hath ofttimes found.

But if ever a man on the earth was born
Whom the Watchers from Heaven with honour crowned,
That man was Tantalus: yet of their favour
No profit he had, nor of that high bliss.
But the man's proud stomach was drunk with its savour
And gorged with pride; and by reason of this
He drew on him ruin utter-crushing;
For Zeus hung o'er him a huge black scaur,
And he cowers from it aye on his head down-rushing
From happiness exiled far.

(*Str.* 3)

And there unto torment fettered for ever
Living on, living on in eternal despair
He abides with the Three[1] on whom hope dawns never,
He who from the feast of the Gods could dare
To steal the ambrosia and nectar whereby
They had given him immortality,
That the guests of his wine-cup might revel thereon!
But who thinketh to hide his evil doing
From God, he errs to his bitter ruing!
So then the Immortals sent back his son
Exiled to earth from the heavenly home,
Thenceforth with the sons of a day to abide.
But in process of time, when Pelops was come
To the flower-bright season of life's springtide,
When the soft rose-tint of his cheek 'gan darken,
To the whisper of love did his spirit hearken,
And he dreamed of the world-famed bride

(*Ant.* 3)

Hippodameia, the glorious daughter
Of the Lord of Pisa, a prize for him
Who could win her. Alone by the surf-white water
Of the sea he stood in the darkness dim.

1. Tityos, Sisyphus and Ixion.

To the Thunder-voiced he cried o'er the wave,
To the Lord of the Trident mighty to save:
And lo, at his side did the God appear.
And 'O Poseidon,' he spake imploring,
'If the gifts of the Cyprian Queen's outpouring
To thy spirit, O King, be in any wise dear,
His bronze lance let not Œnomaus lift
To mine hurt, but cause me to Elis to ride
On a god-given chariot passing swift:
There throne thou me by victory's side.
For lovers by that spear merciless-slaying
Have died thirteen, and he still is delaying
To bestow his child as a bride.

(*Ep.* 3)

In the path doth a mighty peril lie;
To the craven soul no welcome it gives.
But, seeing a man must needs once die,
Wherefore should I unto old age screen
From peril a life that only *lives*,
Sitting nameless and fameless in darkness unseen,
In the deeds of the valiant never sharing?
Nay, lies at my feet the challenge now:
I will accept it for doing and daring!
Good speed to mine heart's desire grant thou!'
Not fruitless the cry of his heart's desiring
Was uttered. The God heard gracious-souled,
And crowned him with honour. Winged steeds untiring
He gave, and a chariot of gold.

(*Str.* 4)

So he won for his bride that maiden peerless;
For her terrible father he overcame.
And she bare to him six sons battle-fearless,
Captains of war-hosts, thirsting for fame.
And his portion assured hath Pelops still
Where the priests the blood of the sacrifice spill;
And unto his tomb resorteth the throng

Of strangers from far who have heard his story.
From his grave-mound his spirit beholdeth the glory
Of the mighty Olympian strife of the strong
In the course that from Pelops its name hath ta'en,
Wherein be contending the swift to run
And the thews that be mighty in wrestling-strain.
And whoso therein hath the victory won,
Thereafter on through his life-days ever
Sweetly his peace shall flow as a river
Blissfully gliding on

(*Ant.* 4)

For those Games' sake. Yea, the good that unceasing
On man's lot daily as dew droppeth down
Is that which to each is most well-pleasing.
Now is it my bounden duty to crown
With a strain wherein hoof-beats triumphant ring
In Aeolian mood Sicilia's King.
And hereof is my spirit assured past doubt
That amidst all men on the wide earth dwelling
There is found no host whom with prouder-swelling
Notes in many a winding bout
Of noble song I may glorify,
Yea, none more learned in honour's lore,
None who showeth therein more potency.
The God who guardeth thee watcheth o'er
Thine hopes and thine aims, that no evil assail thee ;
And if—O nay, but he cannot fail thee !—
I trust ere long once more

(*Ep.* 4)

To chant a triumph than all more sweet,
Inspiration-wafted, as one that flies
In a chariot, on paths of utterance meet,
Till I win unto Kronos' Hill sunbright.
O yea, in my Muses' quiver lies
A song-arrow winged for stronger flight.

By diverse paths men upward aspire :
Earth's highest summit by kings is attained.
Thou therefore look to attain no higher
Than earth. Be it thine on the height thou hast gained
To pace mid splendour of royal achieving
Thy life through : mine be it no less long
To consort with victors, from Hellas receiving
The world o'er praise for my song.

Olympian II.

For Theron, ruler of Akragas in Sicily, on a victory won in the chariot-race, in 476 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

Songs, lords of the lyre ! what God shall we hymn ?—what hero's [praises ?—
What man's fame publish afar ?
Pisa doth Zeus own ; Herakles stablished Olympia's races
With the regal spoils of his war ;
Theron, who honours the guest, whose four steeds raced victorious,
Akragas' stay, let us chant, full flower of an ancestry glorious,
His city's saviour-star.

(*Ant.* 1)

Toils bravely his fathers endured, and a hallowed home by the river
They reared : they were Sicily's eye.
And to crown their inborn worth, Fair Fortune attended them, giver
Of wealth and of dignity.
Son of Kronos and Rhea, enthroned in Olympus, thou lord of the choicest
Of contests by Alpheus' ford, guard, since in our song thou rejoicest,
For their sons ever graciously

(*Ep.* 1)

Their fatherland-soil ! When for right or for wrong hath been woven the [tissue
Of our deeds, not Time the father of all can reverse the issue.
Yet oblivion may come of the past

With the dawn of a happier day ; for overmastered and slain
By the sunlight of happiness oft is memory's rankling pain,
When broad and high at the last

(*Str.* 2)

Prosperity grows by the fiat of God. Yea, of Kadmus' daughters
This thing I have said proved true :—
Sore anguish they suffered, yet mightier blessings from out the waters
Of affliction the stricken ones drew.
Mid thunder-crash Semele perished, yet lives in the heavenly star-land ;
And Pallas and Zeus and her son, who is crowned with the ivy-garland,
Enfold her with love ever new.

(*Ant.* 2)

With the Sea-maids, the daughters of Nereus, to Ino a life unending
In the deep is ordained for aye.
But to mortals no date is appointed whereon death's bolt descending
Shall smite ; nor can any man say
When one day, child of the sun, shall in calm peace close with unbroken
Blessing. With sorrow and joy run life's streams, giving no token
How their mutable courses will stray.

(*Ep.* 2)

So Destiny, she who the line of the fathers of Theron hath guided
To happiness, yet for their god-given bliss hath also provided
In its season a bitter reverse,
Since the hour when met in his journeying Laïus was, and killed
By his doom-driven son, and the word that from Pytho went forth was
The old-time prophecy-curse. [fulfilled,

(*Str.* 3)

Swift Erinys beheld it, and slew by hands with a brother's blood gory
His warrior sons. When died
Polyneikes, Thersander was left to win in a new war glory,
The Adrastids' saviour and pride.
From him these trace their descent ; and the son of a prince most meetly
With all praises of song triumphant and lyres outpealing sweetly
This day shall be magnified.

(*Ant.* 3)

Olympia's guerdon he won, and at Pytho and Isthmus the Graces,
Who his kindred have evermore blessed,
Brought to his brother the crowns of the twelve-course four-horse races.
Ay, triumph to pain bringeth rest.
Riches with nobleness graced of many things bring fruition,
And they kindle the deep-glowing fire of the huntress of honour, Ambition,
Within their possessor's breast,

(*Ep.* 3)

A lodestar that beacons afar, by whose light men steer most surely,
If he who doth hold by it knoweth what shall be—that they which impurely
Here lived, shall when they have died
Suffer the penalty : sins that in Zeus's realm of light [Night,
Were committed shall One judge there in the underworld Kingdom of
And their awful doom shall decide.

(*Str.* 4)

But through sunlitten nights and days a life of bliss untoiling
Is ordained for the righteous-souled.
No more for a meagre pittance they labour the land sore moiling,
Nor on stormy seas are they rolled ; [keeping,
But with them that be honoured of Gods, who had pleasure in leal oath-
They have joy of a tearless life, while the wicked are endlessly reaping
Sin-harvests too dread to behold.

(*Ant.* 4)

But they that through those three lives have endured, their spirits re-
From sin upon each side death,[1] [fraining
These traverse the pathway of Zeus, to the Tower of Kronos attaining,
Where the breezes of Ocean breathe [glowing,
Round the Isles of the Blest, where flowers all-golden like flames are
Which are drooping from trees of splendour, or float on the flood soft-
And their heads and their hands they enwreathe, [flowing ;

1. Perhaps based on the Pythagorean doctrine of Transmigration. The good after death enjoy, for a limited season, restful happiness in the underworld ; then they pass through two re-incarnations ; and when they have passed unstained through their three periods of earthly probation, they are admitted to a life of endless felicity in the Islands of the Blest.

(*Ep.* 4)

As it standeth by just Rhadamanthus decreed, the eternal assessor
Of Kronos the husband of Rhea, of her who is throned possessor
Of dominion the universe o'er.
And Peleus and Kadmus are numbered amidst the glorified there ;
And the heart of Zeus by Thetis' petition was swayed, that she bare
Achilles to that blest shore,

(*Str.* 5)

Him who slew the invincible Hector, and Troy's strong pillar did shiver,
And of whom was Kyknus slain
And the Dawn-queen's Aethiop son. Many swift shafts lie in my quiver ;
To the wise is their meaning plain ;
For the common herd need they interpreters. Who is by nature discerning
Is the poet inspired ; but the vehement babblers of other men's learning
Croak vanity—crows be the twain !—[1]

(*Ant.* 5)

At the hallowed eagle of Zeus ! O my soul, on the bow be thou aiming—
And at whom in all love wilt thou speed
The renown-giving arrow ? To Akragas send thou it, boldly proclaiming—
Bidding Truth of thine oath take heed—
That through years five-score no city on earth hath been known to rear on
Her breast any son more kindly in spirit to friends than Theron,
None of more liberal deed.

(*Ep.* 5)

Yet praise is by spite ever dogged, wherein never is justice abiding,
But from grasping envy it springs ; with its slanders it fain would be hiding
In darkness the good deeds done
By the noble of heart. But, as no man can number the great sea's sands,
So the joys on his fellow-men showered by Theron with lavish hands,
Who telleth the tale of them ? None !

1. Explained by scholiasts as a reference to Pindar's rivals, the Cean poets, Simonides and his nephew Bacchylides.

Olympian III.

For Theron of Akragas, on the same victory as the preceding ode, which was probably chanted in the palace of Theron; whereas this was sung in the temple of the Twin Brethren.

(*Str.* 1)

Oh Tyndarids, lords of all guest-welcoming,
Oh Helen of the tresses beauty-crowned,
Take pleasure in my praises, when I sing
Akragas far-renowned,
Chanting her son's Olympian victory,
The glory of his tireless-footed team.
The Muse hath thrilled me with new harmony
Of wedded song and dance, in revelry
Where Dorian sandals gleam.

(*Ant.* 1)

Garlands of victory twined in Theron's hair
Exact of me this debt that Heaven ordains
For Ainesidamus' son in order fair
To blend the varying strains
Of lyres with voice of flutes and ordering
Of chanted words; and Pisa bids proclaim
His glory—Pisa, poesy's well-spring
Whence, by the Gods inspired, the great songs ring
That give men deathless fame,

(*Ep.* 1)

Even they about whose hair the silvery-gleaming
Adorning of the olive-leaf is laid
By the Aetolian judge's righteous deeming
The victor's brows to shade,
According unto Herakles' ancient hest.
From Ister's shadowy springs he brought this tree,
When fared Amphitryon's son on perilous quest
And gave Olympia's games this fairest, best
Trophy of victory.

(*Str.* 2)

His courteous speech that Norland people swayed—
The folk who serve Apollo—to bestow
To his true-hearted prayer for Zeus's glade.
Whither all Hellenes go,
A shadowing tree, a universal boon,
A wreath for prowess of the mighty given.
When hallowed were Zeus' altars, lo, the Moon
Of midmonth flashed her splendour plenilune
Full in the face of Even.

(*Ant.* 2)

Then for those great Games he ordained for ever
Just judgment and a Five-year Festival
By the steep banks of Alpheus' hallowed river.
But of fair trees and tall
In Kronian Pelops' glen, that chosen place,
His garden-close, was as a desert bare.
Him-seemed it lay unscreened beneath the blaze
Of scorching Helios' arrow-darting rays.
Wherefore he yearned to fare

(*Ep.* 2)

To Ister's land, where She of the swift horses,
Queen Leto's Child, received him graciously
When from the hills and winding watercourses
He came of Arcady,
Sped on Eurystheus' mission forth to find—
By his sire's doom, wherefrom is no appeal—
The Orthian Wood-queen's golden-antlered hind,
Vowed to her by Taÿgete, and signed
With consecration's seal.

(*Str.* 3)

And in that chase he looked upon the land
That sheltered lies behind the North-wind cold,
And saw its olive-trees. There did he stand
And marvelled to behold,

And dearly yearned to enring with those same trees
The goal round which twelve times swift horses strain.
Graciously still to these festivities
He comes: with him be godlike presences,
Even Leda's scions twain.

(*Ant.* 3)

These charged he with the Great Games' ordering
Ere hence he passed to heavenly halls afar,
The struggle of strong men, the sweep and swing
Of the swift-rushing car.
'The Emmenids and Theron Fame hath crowned
This day!' my soul constraineth me to cry,
'Fame given by Tyndareus' Sons the steed-renowned,
Since unto these of all men most they abound
In hospitality,

(*Ep.* 3)

With hearts of reverence rendering due measure
Of service to the Gods for ever blest.'
As water chiefest is, and of all treasure
Gold is held goodliest,
So Glory's pinnacle doth Theron gain
By his high prowess: yea, his fame hath won
To Herakles' pillars! Farther to attain
Wise and unwise all fruitlessly should strain,
Nor press I vainly on.

Olympian IV.

For Psaumis of Camarina, in Sicily, on a victory won in the chariot-race, 452 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

Zeus, hurler of thunderbolts tireless-winging,
Most Highest, returneth thy Feast-tide fair
To send me to wed with the lyre subtle-ringing
My song: of the chiefest of all Games singing
To the victor's triumph my witness I bear.

Yea, the hearts of the good are with joy ever leaping
When friends a harvest of triumph are reaping.
O Kronos' Son, whose dominion is o'er
Etna, the wind-scourged burden laid
On Typho the demon of heads five-score,
Receive thou this revel-procession arrayed
For a victory won by the Graces' aid.

(*Ant.* 1)

For its chant is a record for ever abiding
Of wide-prevailing achievement's renown,
On-ushering olive-crowned Psaumis, as riding
His chariot he hasteth, aglow for dividing
His fame with his own Camarina-town.
May our prayers be graciously heard in heaven
As we supplicate blessings yet to be given
Unto him who is strenuous ever to train
The steed, who with wide arms welcomes the guest,
The pure-hearted patriot who strives to attain
Peace—truth do I speak from an unfeigned breast!
Of man is the trial the one proof-test.

(*Ep.* 1)

By such trial it was that Klymenus' son[1]
Silenced the Lemnian women's taunting
Who mocked at his tresses grey;
For the footrace in armour of bronze he won.
To Hypsipyle then with no vain vaunting,
As he passed to be crowned, did he say:
'Lo there, my fleetness of foot have ye seen!
And mine hands be as strong, and mine heart as keen.
Ay, and not seldom silver-hoary
Show the tresses of young men, long ere the story
Hath been told of their life's spring-day.'

1. Erginus, one of the Argonauts. The occasion was the funeral games for Thoas, queen Hypsipyle's father.

Olympian V.

For Psaumis of Camarina, on a victory won in the mule-chariot-race, (probably) in 448 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

O Camarina, bright daughter of Ocean, with glad spirit greet
Him who the crown of Olympian achievement and glory most sweet
Brings for his gifts to thee won by his car-team's unwearying feet,

(*Ant.* 1)

Psaumis! O nurse of a nation, to magnify thee hath he raised
Altars, twin altars twice three, where at feasts of the Blessèd Ones blazed
Steers that were slain; and for five days the goals of the race-course they grazed,

(*Ep.* 1)

Chariots of horses and mules, and swift coursers. To thee consecrated
All his proud glory was, and to his sire and the burg new-created.

(*Str.* 2)

Back from Oenomaus' home and from Pelops' dear dwelling he brings
Songs unto Pallas Protectress of Cities; her precinct he sings,
Sings of thy river Oanis, the mere that thine highland enrings.

(*Ant.* 2)

Hallowèd Hipparis sings he that quencheth thy citizens' thirst,
Floating down fast for rebuilding thee trees in his hill-cradle nursed,
So that from darkness the light of new life on thy commonwealth burst.

(*Ep.* 2)

Labour and cost for all noble achievement in one must be blended:
Veiled is the issue in risk; but success is for wisdom commended.

(*Str.* 3)

Cloud-hidden Saviour, O Zeus who art throned on the Kronian hill-crest,
Honourest Alpheus' flood and the cave under Ida's green breast,
Suppliant I come to thee, voicing through Lydian flutes my request:

(*Ant.* 3)

O let this city with chivalry's glory be aye magnified!
Thou too, Olympian victor, whose god-nurtured steeds are thy pride,
Unto a peaceful old age mayst thou win with thy sons at thy side.

(*Ep.* 3)

If as a well-watered garden thy bliss be, and if thou desire not [not!
More, with thy wealth and thine honours content—unto godhead aspire

Olympian VI.

For Agesias, a citizen both of Syracuse and of Stymphalus in Arcadia, on a victory won by his charioteer, Phintis, in the mule-car race, 468 or 472 B.C. Sung in Stymphalus, owing to the jealousy of his success shown (l. 74) by those of the opposite faction in Syracuse.

(*Str.* 1)

'Neath our song's forecourt-rooftree pillars golden
Will we uprear; a palace shall it seem.
'Tis meet the forefront shine out far-beholden
Of work that hath such splendour-flashing theme.
The victor at Olympia, who withal
Is treasurer of Zeus's oracle-altar,
Who is co-founder of the glorious wall
Of Syracuse—shall his song-praises falter?
Share not the joy his fellow-burghers all?

(*Ant.* 1)

Such sandal—let the son of Sostratus know it—
Gleams on his foot. Deeds without peril brought
To pass on land or sea win from no poet
Honour; but of each high achievement wrought
With hard toil, many the recorders are.
Thy deeds, Agesias, that same praise hath followed
Which justly Adrastus spake and published far
Of Amphiaraus, when the earth had swallowed
Oïkleus' son and his bright battle-car.

(*Ep.* 1)

When on the seven great pyres the dead lay burning,
Before Thebes' gates the son of Talaos cried :
' For one that is not here mine heart is yearning,
Eye of mine host, good seer and warrior tried ! '
And this same praise in song processional
To Syracuse' son is rendered with all fitness.
I, who hate strife and disputation's gall,
With a great oath to him I bear my witness :
The sweet-voiced Muses sanction it withal.

(*Str.* 2)

Phintis, thy mighty mule-team harness straightway,
That we may speed along a clear highway
The car, that I may reach the ancestral gateway
Whence came his race. None know so well as they
To find the track, who at Olympia won
Crowns : wherefore unto them it well beseemeth
That wide the doors of song should now be thrown.
For Pitane-ward, to where Eurotas gleameth
Must I in season due this day begone.

(*Ant.* 2)

Now Pitane bare, by Lord Poseidon fathered,
Evadne of the violet hair, men say,
But hid her shame 'neath vesture-folds upgathered,
Till she might send her maidens thence away,
Bidding them bear her babe to Eilatus' son
Who at Phaisane ruled in hill-girt places
Arcadian, and his lot by Alpheus won.
There was Evadne nurtured : in the embraces
Of Phoebus her love's story was begun.

(*Ep.* 2)

She could not for her full time hide the blossom
Of a God's love from Aipytus : keen dread
And wrath no words might utter racked his bosom.
For light in darkness Pytho-ward he sped.

She laid the while her girdle crimson-twined
'Neath boughs dark-shadowing, and her silver ewer.
And there she bore a boy of godlike mind ;
For golden-haired Apollo drew unto her
The Fates, and Eileithyia travail-kind.

(*Str.* 3)

So from her womb in painless birth outleaping
Iamus came. Grief-stricken on the ground
She left him. Came two bright-eyed serpents creeping
By the Gods' counsel ; softly coiling round
They fed him with the sweet dews of the bee.
But when the king from rocky Pytho riding
Came, he asked all his household eagerly :
' Where is the babe Evadne bare in hiding ?
For fathered of Apollo's self is he ;

(*Ant.* 3)

A prophet shall he be all men excelling
To this folk : nevermore shall fail his race.'
But they, ' Of him have we heard no man telling,
Nor seen him '—yet the babe was born five days !
But in a pathless reed-brake, oversprayed
With gold and purple splendours was he lying,
Which pansy-petals on his soft flesh rayed.
' So shall he,' spake his mother prophesying,
' Bear this name that through all time shall not fade.'[1]

(*Ep.* 3)

Now when to fruitage of youth golden-pinioned
He won, to Alpheus' mid-stream he strode
'Neath the night-stars, and on the wide-dominioned,
His grandsire, called, and Delos' Archer-god,
Praying, ' Let honour nation-fostering rest
Upon mine head ! ' And answer made his father
With voice infallible to his request :
' Arise, and to that place where all men gather
Follow, my son, obeying my behest.'

1. *Iamus*, from *ia*, the pansies (*viola tricolor*) among which he lay.

(*Str.* 4)

So reached they Kronion's[1] steep rock sunward-soaring.
There prophecy's twin treasure gave his sire—
To hear his voice unswerving truth outpouring
First: then, when Herakles, that soul of fire,
Should come, when he, the Alkaïds' seed renowned,
Should found his God-sire's Feast thronged by all nations,
Of all world-games with chiefest honour crowned,
Then high on Zeus's altar of oblations
A second oracle he bade him found.

(*Ant.* 4)

Thereafter through all Hellas famed in story
Were Iamus' sons, and prospered. High emprise
They honour; so they tread the path of glory.
The achievement proves the man: but envious eyes
Of slanderers follow still him on whose head
The Grace rains beauty, who before all other
His chariot round the twelvefold course hath sped.
Agesias, if the forbears of thy mother,
Who 'neath Kyllene had their old homestead,

(*Ep.* 4)

With prayer and sacrifice ceased not adoring
Heaven's herald Hermes, him in whom begun
Be Games and ended, who is honour pouring
On Arcady's hero-land—He, Sostratus' son,
With his deep-thundering Sire, thy bliss fulfils.
My tongue is poesy's whetstone shrilly-sounding!
That fancy all my willing spirit thrills
With breathings beauty-rippling. Flower-abounding
Metope in Stymphalus ringed of hills,

(*Str.* 5)

My ancestress, bare Thebe chariot-glorious.
I'll sip her dear springs, and for warriors twine

1. 'The Hill of Kronos.' The i is short, whereas in Kronion, 'Son of Kronos,' it is long.

A song-wreath rainbow-hued. Thy choir victorious,
O Aeneas,[1] teach to chant the Maid divine
Hera, and know that none in after days
With scoffed '*Boeotian swine!*' our ear abuses!
A messenger thou art whose faith all praise,
O cryptic herald-staff of bright-haired Muses.
Sweet mixing-bowl of royal-ringing lays!

(*Ant.* 5)

Bid Syracuse and Ortygia's praise be chanted,
By Hiero with righteous sceptre swayed
Who honours Her whose feet on furrows planted
Make red the corn, the great Feast of the Maid
Of the White Steeds, and Zeus throned on the height
Of Etna honours. Lyre and song sweet-pealing
Know Hiero well. His fortune may the flight
Of time not wreck! With welcome love-revealing,
King, greet this song that chants Agesias' might,

(*Ep.* 5)

Which from Stymphalus' mother-town comes winging,
From home to home—Sicilia, Arcady!
'Tis good the ship on anchors twain be swinging
In night of storm. May Heaven propitiously
Grant either folk high glory without stain.
In thy protection, Sea-lord King, enfolden
Straight onward may he sail: guard him from bane,
Spouse of the Sea-queen of the distaff golden,
And bless the gladsome flower of this my strain.

1. The trainer of the choir that chanted this ode in Stymphalus, whither Aeneas bore it from Thebes.

Olympian VII.

For Diagoras of Rhodes, on his victory in boxing, 464 B.C. The Rhodians placed this ode, engraved in letters of gold, in their temple of Athena at Lindus.

(*Str.* 1)

As a father with wealth-laden hand upliftеth a cup
With the flashing dew of the joy-giving wine brimmed up,
And pledgeth therein the youth who hath won for a bride
His daughter, and therewith giveth to him, to bear
From the old home unto the new, that golden pride
Of his treasures, and maketh the fair feast yet more fair,
And his kinsman envied of all friends banqueting there
For the marriage that joins hearts, one evermore to abide ;

(*Ant.* 1)

So send I the Song-queens' gift, the nectar outpoured
From my spirit, its vintage of sweetness, a chant to record
The triumph of guerdon-winners, their victory
At Olympia and Pytho gained in the athlete-strife.
Whom praiseful report companioneth, happy is he !
Now on one, now another the Grace that enricheth life
Propitiously looks, and with manifold music of fife
And of lyre sweet-echoing breathes on him melody.

(*Ep.* 1)

To the sound of the lyre and the pipe on-sailing
Homeward I come with Diagoras hailing
Aphrodite's Daughter, the Bride of the Sun,
Sea-girdled Rhodes, to a man fair-fighting
And strong giving glory, whose clenched hand smiting
By Alpheus and Castaly garlands hath won.
And his father I praise, who in justice excelleth,
And in Rhodes triple-citied mid warriors dwelleth
Nigh Asia's foreland that seaward doth run.

(*Str.* 2)

From their line's first father beginning, I fain would upraise,
From Tlepolemus, this mine herald-song of praise,
The common right this of Herakles' puissant race ;
For these be descended from Zeus on the father's side,—
Ay, this is their boast !—on the mother's their blood they trace
To Amyntor through Astydameia Tlepolemus' bride.
Thick clouds of delusion the truth from men's hearts hide :
This thing would we find, yet aye it eludes our chase,

(*Ant.* 2)

What is best for a man to attain both now and at last.
For the founder of this land smote in his passionate haste
Alkmena's base-born brother a deadly blow
With his olive-wood staff, as forth Likymnius came
From Midea's bower ; for his spirit with wrath was aglow.
In the city of Tiryns befell that sin and shame.
Yea, the feet of the wise be misled when the soul is aflame
With wrath. To the oracle fratricide-stained did he go.

(*Ep.* 2)

And the Golden-haired spake from his shrine sweet-breathing :
' Thou must voyage afar o'er a sea surf-seething,
From the shore of Lerna in exile sped,
To a sea-ringed land of pasture, where showered
By the King of the Gods omnipotent-powered
Was a golden snow, when forth of the head
Of Zeus by the axe of Hephaistus sundered
Athena leapt, and her shout far thundered,
That Heaven and Earth-mother quaked with dread.'

(*Str.* 3)

Hyperion's Son, the God who bringeth the day,
Commanded his children :[1] ' See that your debt ye repay.
Of all men be ye first to uprear in your isle in my sight

1. The first inhabitants of Rhodes were children of the Sun (Heliades).

To the Goddess an altar : her godhead do ye revere
With offerings holy, filling the souls with delight
Of Allfather and Her of the thunderous-crashing spear.'
It is Reverence, Forethought's daughter, that maketh dear
To the spirits of men high courage and joy of the fight.

(*Ant.* 3)

Yet there cometh Oblivion's wildering mist, to misguide
The hearts of men, and to cause them to swerve aside
From the deed's straight path ; and so it befell that these
Not bearing the seed of flame to the altar drew nigh.
So with fireless rites did they plant those hallowed trees
On their citadel's height. Yet Zeus drew over their sky
A fire-hued cloud whence rained gold plenteously,
And the Grey-eyed made them in all craft-mysteries

(*Ep.* 3)

Unrivalled ; for on their highways were gleaming
Things living and moving to outward seeming,[1]
So that great was their glory. Yea, craft that doth show
No semblance of false pretence excelleth
In the eyes of the wise. Now a legend telleth
How that Zeus and the Deathless drew lots to know
How shared should the earth be. Rhodes was unrisen
From the wide sea's breast, but in darkling prison
Of abysses of brine lay far below.

(*Str.* 4)

But since in the place where they gathered the Sun-god was not,
None for that stainless Divine One had drawn a lot ;
And so, when he spake of it, Zeus was minded again
To cast the lots ; but Helios would not : he said
That he saw deep under the face of the hoary main
A land upgrowing fast from its rocky bed,

1. Implying that the Rhodians were the first who made statues in attitudes of movement.

A land that for myriad dwellers should bring forth bread,
Should rejoice in its sheep-flocks whitening hill and plain.

(*Ant.* 4)

Eftsoons unto Lachesis golden-tired spake he :
' Uplift thou thine hands, and swear in sincerity
The Gods' great Oath, and pledge thee with Kronos' Son
That the isle that shall be sent up into heaven's light
Shall be mine head's guerdon of honour while time shall run.'
And the word of truth that from Lachesis' lips took flight
Was fulfilled in the end. Grew up, as a flower blooms bright,
That isle from the rolling darkness of water won.

(*Ep.* 4)

He possesseth it, Sire of the sun-arrows gleaming,
The breath of whose steeds is a flame outstreaming.
With Rhodos the Isle-nymph there he lay :
Seven sons he begat, who in years forgotten
Were wisest of men ; and of one were begotten
Ialysus, Lindus, Kameirus ; and they
Of their father's land made threefold division,
Neither any transgressed that righteous partition ;
And after them named be their homes to this day.

(*Str.* 5)

There standeth an altar, a sweet recompense for the grief
Of his fall before Troy, to Tlepolemus battle-chief
Of Tirynthians : as to a God do they sacrifice
Victims, the reek of whose burning floats far round.
And at athlete-strife in his name is awarded the prize.
There twice were Diagoras' brows with flower-wreaths bound,
And at Isthmus the famed four times, and at Nemea crowned
Once and again, and at crag-built Athens twice.

(*Ant.* 5)

At Argos the victors' bronze shield knoweth him well ;
Memorials in Thebes and Arcadia his glory tell ;
At Pellene in games Boeotian the prize did he gain ;
Six times in Aegina he conquered ; in Megara

The column of stone doth chant none other strain.
O Father Zeus, who holdest omnipotent sway
Over wild Atabyrium's ridges, honour this day
The victory-hymn that use and wont ordain !

(*Ep.* 5)

And the hero whose hands have so gallantly striven,
Unto him be all worshipful honour given
Alike of the stranger and citizen.
For he treadeth the path that from insolence turneth :
Great lessons bequeathed by his fathers he learneth
By his true heart taught. Thou, hide not from men
His fame who from Kallianax' blood springeth.
With the Eratids' joy lo, all Rhodes ringeth !
Yet the winds in an hour may be veering again.

Olympian VIII.

For Alkimedon of Aegina, on his victory in the Boys' wrestling-match, 460 B.C. His brother, Timosthenes, and his trainer, Melesias the Athenian, have a share in the praises of the ode.

(*Str.* 1)

Mother of contests golden-crowned, O Queen
Of truth, Olympia, where from sacrifice
Diviners seek the will of Zeus to glean,
Who hurls white-flickering lightnings through the skies,
To wot if he hath any word of grace
For men whose hearts yearn hotly to attain
To high achievement, and a breathing-space
From toil to gain.

(*Ant.* 1)

This he vouchsafes to reverent prayer and vow.
O Pisan precinct fair with olive-lines,
Welcome this victory-procession thou,
And the crown-bearing ! Bright his glory shines

Whom splendour of thy guerdon shall attend!
Ay, diverse boons to diverse men be given,
And many paths to happiness ascend
By grace of Heaven.

(*Ep.* 1)

Timosthenes, to Zeus, who hath in keeping
Thine house, thee and thy brother Destiny
Allotted: He at Nemea honoured thee,
And Kronos' Hill saw glory's harvest-reaping,
Alkimedon's Olympian victory.
Goodly of presence, not by deeds he shamed
His beauty! He, in wrestling-bout victorious,
Aegina of far-sweeping oars proclaimed
His home. There Saviour Themis, throned all-glorious
With Guest-ward Zeus, is most with honour named.

(*Str.* 2)

Far-reaching issues, whose decision still
Shifteth, with mind unwarped to judge of these
Fairly, is hard: yet sure the Immortals' will
Ordained this island rampired by the seas
To be for strangers out of every clime
A god-reared pillar of strength, land of the free—
Oh may the years in this work through all time
Toil tirelessly!—

(*Ant.* 2)

This isle committed unto Dorian hands
To be Heaven's stewards, since, in Aiakus' days,
When Phoebus and the Girder of all lands
A tower-coronal for Troy would raise,
And as their fellow-builder bade him come
To rear that wall, which should, when wars awoke,
Breathe out, when battle brought her day of doom,
Wild-billowing smoke.

(*Ep.* 2)

Scarce was it built, when, with eyes lurid-glaring,
Three dragons leapt to scale its ramparts high.
Now twain of these fell back, and suddenly

Died, writhing as in impotent despairing :
But the third leapt in with fierce battle-cry.
That portent Phoebus pondered ; then spake he :
' Aiakus, where thine hands reared this stone wonder,
There breached and taken Pergamus shall be,
As this sign sent down by the Lord of Thunder,
Zeus, Kronos' Son, revealeth unto me.

(*Str.* 3)

This shall thine house accomplish. Troy shall fall
Stormed by thy son and thy fourth in descent.'
So plainly spake the God, and therewithal
To Xanthus and the fleet-horsed Amazons went,
And unto Ister speeding fast his car.
With golden team the Trident-wielder fares
To Isthmus oversea, and Aiakus far
To Aegina bears.

(*Ant.* 3)

Thence, to behold his glorious festival,
To Corinth's mountain-ridge he bore him on.
No praise of song is sweet alike to all :
If I retrace all fame Melesias[1] won
Through boys, no stone at me let envy fling !
I sing of honours no less high attained
At Nemea, and of crowns pankratian sing
By his men gained.

(*Ep.* 3)

To teach is no hard task for him who knoweth ;
But who unlearned would teach, a fool is he,
For wit untrained hath no stability.
But this Melesias best of all men showeth
How with the strong to strive victoriously,
Teacheth what training shall to triumph guide
Our champion to repeat the oft-told story,
In those great Games, of longed-for victory's pride.

1. The most successful trainer of men and boys for athletic contests.

Now hath Alkimedon achieved that glory—
Melesias' thirtieth triumph published wide!

(*Str.* 4)

By God's grace, and by his own prowess he
Hath vanquished striplings four. Ha! not for him,
But them, to steal back home shamefacedly
Shrinking from taunting tongues through bypaths dim!
His victory hath thrilled his old grandsire
With strength that o'er eld's frailty triumpheth.
For he that hath attained his heart's desire
Forgetteth death.

(*Ant.* 4)

I must awaken Memory, I wis,
To tell the glory of old champions' might,
The Blepsiads' conquering sons: the sixth crown this
That wreathes their brows from those games garland-dight.
Yea, their dead fathers have their share therein,
When due memorial rites are not forgot.
The grace of honour living kinsmen win
The dust hides not.

(*Ep.* 4)

The song by Hermes' child, Glad-tidings, chanted
Shall Iphion hear, his bright Olympic fame,
And to Kallimachus shall tell the same,[1]
The glory Zeus to this old House hath granted.
With triumph on triumph may he crown their name,
And aye avert affliction's bitter blow!
And, for the glory in their lot, may never
God's jealousy make Nemesis their foe.
May he exalt them and their country, ever
Vouchsafing them a life unvexed of woe.

1. The victor's deceased father and uncle shall hear the tidings in Hades.

Olympian IX.

For Epharmostus of Opus, in Eastern Locris, on his victory in wrestling, 468 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

Archilochus' chant of the sweet voice singing
The Olympian hymn of victory,[1]
With its threefold measure of triumph outringing,
Sufficed to lead onward the revelry
To the Hill of Kronos, as paced along
Epharmostus amidst of his comrade-throng.
But now with such soul-stirring arrows of song
As in these our days fly fittingly
Shot from the Muses' bows far-ranging,
Sing praises, my soul, unto Zeus, whose hand
Hurls red-glowing lightnings sin-avenging;
And the holy foreland of Elis-land
Praise thou, the land which long agone
Pelops the hero, Lydia's son,
With Hippodameia for dowry won,
The glorious clasp of her wedlock-band.

(*Ant.* 1)

And a sweet feathered shaft on the bowstring laying
Pytho-ward shoot thou: not to the ground
Shall thy words fall, when thy fingers are straying
O'er the quivering strings of the lyre, to sound
The praise of a lord of the wrestling-ring
Who from Opus the famed came journeying;

1. An ancient hymn to Herakles, by Archilochus (fl. 650 B.C.), of which the first two lines were:

"Hail, O king Herakles, O victory-glorious!
Hail thou and Iolaus, spear-victorious!"

It was traditionally sung in honour of the victor, whenever no special ode was ready. Its refrain, in imitation of the sound of striking lyre-strings, τήνελλα καλλίνικε ("cling-clang, O glorious victor!") was thrice repeated.

And the glory of that good town do thou sing
And the praise of her champion triumph-crowned.
'Tis a city that Themis and Safety-bestower,
Her child Fair Governance, won for their own ;
And in knightly deeds she blooms as a bower ;
For by Castaly's fountain her praise is known,
And Alpheus murmureth her renown,
Where blow fair flowers for victory's crown
To shine on the brows of the mother-town
Of Lokris, with trees girt stately-grown.

(*Ep.* 1)

The light of my song shall fierily blaze
O'er this city so dear unto me,
And swifter than high-mettled steed can race
Or a white-winged galley can flee,
I will speed this story of Opus' glory
Far, far over land, over sea,
If by Destiny guided my hand essay
To gather fruit and flower
In the Graces' garden of gardens, for they
All things delightsome shower.
Whether hero or poet one be, he doth owe it
To Heaven's all-gracious power.

(*Str.* 2)

How else could Herakles' arm have wielded
Mace against Trident in battle-strain ?—
When by Poseidon was Pylos shielded,
And the Sea-god pressed on the Hero amain,
When fast did the arrows of Phoebus fly
As the silver bow rang terribly,
Neither Hades refrained him from swinging on high
His staff, till his blows flashed down like rain—
The staff wherewithal through the cavernous portals
Of his mansion he leadeth, that Underworld-king,
The shadowy forms of perished mortals :—
Nay, nay, this slander afar from thee fling,

O mouth of mine! Him who dares impeach
The Gods, him hatefullest wisdom doth teach!
O yea, for untimely bold-mouthed speech
Doth with strains insensate of madness ring.

(*Ant.* 2)

Babble not thou in witless folly
Of battle and war of Immortals, nor dare
Blaspheme them! Nay, to the city holy
Of Protogeneia thy song-gift bear,
Telling how by His dooming who wields evermore
The flickering lightning, the thunder's roar,
Deukalion and Pyrrha long of yore
Fixed their first habitation there,
When down from Parnassus they came, and unmated
Of Aphrodite in wedlock-yoke,
Out of the stones of the field created
A race that should be thenceforth one folk;
And from stones were they named, that stone-born race.
Awaken for these thy clear-ringing lays!
O yea, old wine well mayest thou praise;
But 'tis song's fresh flowers that our praises provoke.

(*Ep.* 2)

Out of old days cometh a legend which saith
That the great deep's fountains rained
On the dark earth's bosom a deluge of death,
Till, by counsels of Zeus restrained,
The flood-tide sinking with waters shrinking
Swiftly was seaward drained.
And this stone-born generation's sons
Your grey forefathers were,
All valiant bearers of shields of bronze,
Whom Iapetus' daughters bare
When they made affiance with Kronos' scions,
And kings of their blood reigned there,

(*Str.* 3)

Till the Lord of Olympus, from earth upraising
The daughter of Opus, wafted his bride

To a lone spot meet for a God's embracing
Mid Mainalus' ridges, and lay by her side.
Thereafter to Lokrus the childless he brought
That maid, lest the fingers of eld should blot
Out his name, and his line be continued not
If heirless the king of the land should have died.
But the king's bride bare till her time's fulfilling
The seed of the Mightiest 'neath her zone ;
And the hero rejoiced with a joy heart-thrilling
O'er the fair babe not of his own seed sown ;
And he gave him his mother's father's name,
And a man pre-eminent he became
In goodlihead and in deeds of fame,
And his sire gave a city to rule for his own.

(*Ant.* 3)

And there unto him were gathered strangers :
From Argos the horse-land, from Thebes they hied,
And from Pisa, and Arcady's mountain-rangers ;
But of all that came in his land to abide
Was Aegina's and Aktor's son honoured most,
Menoitius, whose son with the Atreids' host
Unto Teuthras' plain by the Troyland coast
Sailed. There alone by Achilles' side
Steadfast he stood, when Telephus turning
The valiant Danaans backward in flight,
Of their sea-pacing galleys essayed the burning ;
So that all men knew who could deem aright
That a brave soul dwelt in Patroclus' breast.
And the son of Thetis with earnest request
Exhorted him, yea, with insistent behest :
' Never hereafter in murderous fight

(*Ep.* 3)

Do thou range thyself mid the battle-strain
From my man-quelling spear afar ! '
O that to fit praise I may attain
Of those that your champions are,

As, bearing my burden of glory's guerdon,
I speed in the Song-queen's car!
And may Daring attend me close at my side
And Power all-compassing!
For hither at friendship's call have I hied,
And at Chivalry's summons I sing
Of Lampromachus telling in prowess excelling
In the Isthmian athlete-ring.

(*Str.* 4)

Yea, in the same day stood victorious
He and his brother in mimic fray;
And at Corinth's gates was the name twice glorious
Of Epharmostus in athlete-play.
Other wreaths did he win him in Nemea's vale,
And at Argos again did his prowess prevail,
When in strife with men did he nowise fail,
As he failed not at Athens in boyhood's day.
And what contest was that, when, waxing bolder,
From the boys' ranks stealing at Marathon,
He abode the grapple of strong men older
Than he, for the silver cups to be won;
And by ring-craft that shifteth its balance fast
Never falling, he threw them. As tempest-blast
Rang the cheering, as down the arena he passed
In his goodlihead, goodliest deeds who had done.

(*Ant.* 4)

At the festal assembly of Zeus Lycaean
Wondrous he showed in Parrhasia's sight,
And again at Pellene's games Heraean
He won him a warm defence from the spite
Of the blasts of winter, a mantle-vest.
And the sepulchre where Iolaus doth rest,
And Eleusis beside the sea attest
The splendour of all his deeds of might.
The gifts that by Nature's self be given
Are ever the best; yet many there be

That by learning of teachers have painfully striven
To attain unto honour's felicity.
But the deed whose achievement no God hath blessed,
That it never be published abroad is best.
Some paths there be that in glory's quest
Lead farther than others her votary.

(*Ep.* 4)

One path of endeavour, ye well may deem,
Leads not all men unto fame.
Ah, steep are poesy's heights supreme;
Yet, Muse, when thou crownest his name
With thy guerdon of singing, with shout high-ringing
Fearlessly then proclaim
Of our champion, that Nature hath dowered him
By the favour of Fate the divine,
With deftness of hand, with litheness of limb,
With valour's light in his eyne,
And that now victorious hath he made glorious
Oïlean Aias' shrine.

Olympian X.

For Agesidamus of Locri Epizephyrii, (on the S.E. coast of Italy), on his victory in the Boys' wrestling-match, 476 B.C. This Ode was written to be sung at his home in Locri, and is later in date than the next, which was chanted at Olympia immediately after the victory. 'It is probably because the later of the two Odes is longer and more elaborate than the other that it is placed before it in the MSS.' —(Sandys).

(*Str.* 1)

Read ye to me his name—upon mine inmost heart 'tis writ—
Archestratus' son, he who won the Olympian victory:
I owe him a sweet triumph-song—I had forgotten it!
At last, O Muse, and thou, O Truth, the child of Zeus most high,
Do ye with your atoning hands make of the offence an end:
Blot out the stain of broken troth, the sin against a friend!

(*Ant.* 1)

From far hath come accusing Time with wings that slowly trail
Yet surely, crying shame on me for my deep debt unpaid.
Yet if with usury I pay it now, this may avail
To lift the burden, hush the lips that faithlessness upbraid.
My song shall swell as rolling surge that sweeps the shingle down,
Shall pay the wronged one friendship's debt, shall chant his land's renown.

(*Ep.* 1)

Unswerving Honour's home is there beside the western seas,
The Lokrians' burg. They reverence the Queen of Epic Song
And Ares bronze-arrayed. Yea, even mighty Herakles
Must needs before your Kyknus flee, a foeman over-strong.
To Ilas let the Olympian victor render thanks this day,
Who trained Agesidamus' hands for that grim gauntlet-play ;
As oft Patroclus thanked Achilles, saith the old-time story.
The man for high achievement born shall win yet higher glory
If one with God's help whet his spirit's edge to each essay.

(*Str.* 2)

The joy of triumph few have won without hard toil, I ween,
The joy that is a light of life that makes the toil seem naught.
Statutes of Zeus have kindled me to sing the peerless queen
Of contests, which beside the tomb of Pelops ancient-wrought
Did Herakles with altars six found in that haunted dell
When Kteatus, Poseidon's flawless son, before him fell ;

(*Ant.* 2)

And Eurytus he slew withal, to wrest his hire thereby
For service wrought, which Augeas the tyrant grudged to pay.
Couched in a copse 'neath Kleonae in ambush did he lie,
And as they came, leapt forth and fought and slew them in the way ;
For Molos' haughty sons had slaughtered his Tirynthian men
Erewhile by treachery, as they lay encamped in Elis' glen.

(*Ep.* 2)

And verily it was not long ere that Epeian lord
Guest-faithless saw his wealth-abounding land and his own town
Beneath the fire's remorseless breath and iron stroke of sword
Into the dark unfathomed gulf of ruin sinking down.

Ay, when a man hath rushed into contention, hard it is
To win forth thence, and loose the grip of mightier foes, I wis.
Yea, Augeas' self, brought by his redeless counsel to confusion,
Was captive taken at the last, nor 'scaped sin's retribution,
Hurled down to death, as one who falls from some sheer precipice.

(*Str.* 3)

Then Zeus's mighty son assembled all his battle-band
And all the spoil of war: a sacred precinct did he trace
In Pisa for his sire supreme, and fenced on every hand
The Altis, and the bounds thereof in a clear open space
He marked out, and for rest and feasting all the plain around
Ordained; and so was Alpheus' stream by him with honour crowned,

(*Ant.* 3)

With the twelve Royal Gods; and on the height therein bestowed
The name of Kronos' Hill; for when Oenomaus was king
Nameless it was, a crest by clouds of winter oversnowed.
And while men bowed them in that rite primeval worshipping,
The Fates were there unseen, yet close they stood beside him then,
And Time was there, who of the truth alone convinceth men.

(*Ep.* 3)

For, journeying onward, clearly Time hath told truth manifest
How Herakles took battle's gifts, how he divided all,
And to those Gods apportioned out of all the spoils the best,
And with due sacrifice ordained that fifth-year festival,
That first Olympiad whose fame has pealed the ages down.
And who were they, the first that won that new-appointed crown
With battling hands, with racing feet, with chariot swiftly flying,
Who in their hearts the vision saw of glory's wreath undying,
And by their deeds of prowess won unperishing renown?

(*Str.* 4)

Adown the straight course of the racing-track Likymnius' son
Oionus sped: fast did his feet before all rivals bound:
From Midea's gates in Argolis he led his war-host on.
And by his wrestling Echemus made Tegea renowned.
The gauntlet-fighters' guerdon from the lists Doryklus bore
Who dwelt in Tiryns. In the chariot-race of horses four

(*Ant.* 4)

Samos of Mantinea, Halirhothius' son, sped fast
Beyond the rest ; and Phrastus' lance with aim unerring flew ;
And Nikeus past all rival marks the huge stone discus cast,
The weight that whirling round with circling sweep of hand he threw.
Then thundered forth the mighty cheer from all his war-mates there.
And lo, the fair-faced moon's sweet light lit up the evening air.

(*Ep.* 4)

Then rang the close with songs, as music rings through banquet-hall.
So voices still the victor sing, and feet the revel tread.
Now, as the grey beginnings of those contests we recall,
We too, in song named after Victory stately-charioted,
Will chant the thunder's praise, the fiery-handed flames that fly
In crimson-flickering bolts of Him who wakes the thunder's cry,
And sendeth down upon the earth his lurid-gleaming levin
Which sealeth every victory with Zeus's sign from heaven.
And consonant with flutes shall ring my song's rich melody,

(*Str.* 5)

Which here by Dirke's stream renowned hath come to light at last.
As welcome to that father comes a son in wedlock born
Whose feet unto the further slope of young life's hill have passed,
And lights a love-flame in the heart that was of joy forlorn,—
For to a dying man is death a thing to hate yet more
If alien heirs like sheep shall herd his wealth of garnered store ;—

(*Ant.* 5)

Even so, Agesidamus, when from emprise nobly wrought
A man descendeth all unsung to mansions of the dead,
Scant pleasure all his toil hath won, his breath was spent for nought.
But upon thee the sweet-voiced lyre and dulcet flute have shed
The grace of all their winsomeness : like some wide-spreading tree
By those Zeus-born Pierian Maids thy fame shall fostered be.

(*Ep.* 5)

And I, their earnest fellow-worker, to mine heart enfold
This glorious race of Lokrians. Song's honey-dew I shower
On that burg of heroic men. Thy praises have I told,
Archestratus' all-comely son, whose victory in that hour

Achieved by prowess of thine hand by mine own eyes was seen.
Beside the altar crowned in that Olympian demesne
I saw him! Goodly was his presence, strength and beauty blended
With that spring-bloom which glowed on Ganymede when he ascended
Heaven-high above death's ruthless clutch, by favour of Love's Queen.

Olympian XI.

For Agesidamus of Lokri Epizephyrii, for the same victory as the preceding Ode. Chanted at Olympia on the day of victory.

(*Str.*)

Sometimes the wind-battalions shouting loud
Do men most service, now again
The rains of heaven, the children of the cloud,
Bring blessing in their train.
But when by toil one winneth victory,
The singer's honey-throated lays
Upringing, plant for fame that yet shall be
A sure foundation, are a prophecy
Of exploits worthy praise.

(*Ant.*)

Far beyond envy are the praises stored
For victors at Olympia crowned.
Songs are my sheep; I, as some shepherd-lord,
Find them fair pasture-ground.
By God's gift inspiration bloometh aye
In the bard's heart unfadingly.
Son of Archestratus, know thou this day,
Agesidamus, that my victory-lay
Shall sweetly sound for thee,

(*Ep.*)

Shall for the triumph of thy ring-craft grace
With splendour thy bright olive-wreath,

And honour therewithal the Lokrian race
Fanned by the West-wind's breath.
O Song-queens, hither speed your festal feet!
I pledge me in sincerity
No guest-repelling folk ye there shall meet,
Nor in fair chivalry
Unschooled: nay, over wisdom's heights they range,
They with the spear were valiant ever.
That these be like their sires is nowise strange:
Red fox and thunder-throated lion change
Their inborn nature never.

Olympian XII.

For Ergoteles of Himera in Sicily (whither he had come to live when forced by political faction to leave his native city of Knossus in Crete), on his victory in the long foot-race (three miles), 472 B.C.

(*Str.*)

Hear, O thou Daughter of Zeus the Deliverer, Fortune the Saver
From peril! Keep watch and ward, I implore,
Over Himera, burg of the far-stretching might; for 'tis by thy favour
That ships be steered to their haven-shore
Over the sea; and torrent-like wars, and council-decisions
Be guided on land. Tossed high, whelmed low
Be the hopes of men, as over a sea of delusive visions
Cleaving the treacherous waves they go.

(*Ant.*)

But through all the years never any of men on the earth abiding
Hath found sure tokens from God to reveal
How he shall fare in the days to come, but in darkness hiding
Are the future's warnings of woe or weal.
Many chances to men have befallen, yea, past all expectation:
Some plunge from joy into sorrow's abyss;

And some, who have battled with troublous surges, by sudden mutation
Their anguish have changed for the height of bliss.

(*Ep.*)

O son of Philanor, verily even thy swift feet's glory
Had as dead leaves faded, unmarked, uncrowned,
There by the hearth of thy fathers : thy name had been heard not in story ;
As a home-fighting cock hadst thou been unrenowned,
Had contention in Knossus of burgher with burgher in conflict gory
In the homeland not left thee no foot of ground.
But now at Olympia, Ergoteles, winning a victory-garland
And at Isthmus, at Pytho, twain—by these
Thou exaltest to honour the steaming Baths of the Nymphs in a far land,
On thine own lands dwelling in stormless peace.

Olympian XIII.

For Xenophon of Corinth (whose father had won the foot-race forty years before), on his double victory in the Foot-race and the Pentathlon—an unprecedented feat. The Pentathlon consisted of five events, foot-race, long jump, discus, javelin, wrestling. Victory in three events assured a competitor of the crown. 464 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

Now, while I laud a house that thrice can vaunt
Olympian victory, gracious to the guest,
To fellow-burghers courteous, I will chant
With theirs the praise of Corinth heaven-blest.
Here Isthmian Poseidon fixed his portals,
This city glorious—noble sons are hers !
Here hath Fair Governance her home mid mortals,
Here dwell her sisters, city-stablishers,
Justice, and Peace her fellow-fosterling :
God's stewards of true wealth to men they be,
Themis's golden daughters, they who bring
Wise counsels from the Queen of Equity ;

(*Ant.* 1)

And resolute are they afar to scare
Insolence, glutted greed's tongue-shameless dam.
Fair witness of them it is mine to bear ;
By forthright boldness spurred to speak I am.
None can suppress our nature's inborn powers,
Hide them can none. On you, Aletes' seed,
Oftentimes have the Seasons crowned with flowers
Bestowed the splendour of the victor's meed
As upon men with hero-prowess fired,
Men in the sacred Games with victory wreathed ;
And oft into men's souls have they inspired
Devices wise by them of old bequeathed.

(*Ep.* 1)

To him of whom first each invention came
Is all the honour due. Who caused to appear
Dionysus' graces, with the dithyramb
That wins the ox ? Who unto horses' gear
Added the rein ? On temples god-enshrining
Who set the twofold image of the king
Of birds ? Flower-fragrant there the Muse is shining,
And Ares spear-girt by a warrior-ring.

(*Str.* 2)

Olympian Lord most high, who far and wide
Reignest, grudge not fulfilment of my prayer
Through all time ! May this city's folk abide
In safety ! May the breeze of fortune fair
That breathes on Xenophon, blow constant ever !
The due procession singing home his crown
Accept thou, as from Pisa's plain and river
He leads it onward to his native town.
For victor in the Contests Five is he
And in the foot-race : so hath he attained
Such glory multiplied of victory
As mortal never yet before hath gained.

(*Ant.* 2)

And shadowed was his head by garlands twain
When Isthmus saw him win the parsley-meed:
Kindness no less from Nemea did he gain.
The record of his father's lightning speed
Is treasured still where Alpheus softly paces.
Yea, and at Pytho by his feet were won
The crowns of honour in the twofold races,
Single and double, under one day's sun.
In that same month at rocky Athens-town
A day fulfilled of glorious victory
Set on his hair crown after victor's crown
Whose flying feet had won him races three.

(*Ep.* 2)

Seven times Hellotia crowned him. 'Twere too long
To tell how with their father Ptoiadore
Did Terpsias and Eritimus strong[1]
Triumph in games beside the Sea-god's shore;
How oft at Delphi ye, and in the Lion's
Dark glen stood first—though my song-treasury
Outrival all bards, their tale bids defiance
To reckoning; countless as the sands they be.

(*Str.* 3)

But to each thing pertaineth measure meet,
And best of all it is to know aright
The fit time. I, who sail in your great fleet,
Yet choose mine own course, sing the battle-might
And wisdom of old days, and in the telling
Lie not,—of heroism's highways trod
By Corinth, and of Sisyphus excelling
In cunning counsels even as some God,
And of Medea, her who dared defy
Her father, chose at her own heart's behest

1. Cousins of Xenophon.

A bridegroom, and the saviour was thereby
Of Argo and the Heroes of the Quest.

(*Ant.* 3)

Again of old when dashed the war's red seas
Against Troy's walls, 'twas ever Corinth's sons
That swayed to either side war's balance, these
Helping Atreides and his mighty ones
To win back Helen, those to make resistance
Unto the uttermost, when Danaans quailed
Before strong Glaukus, who from the far distance
Of Lycia's highlands flashed on them bronze-mailed,
And vaunted of his father's empery
Over the city of Peirene there,
And of his heritage of deep-loamed lea,
And of his stately palace royal-fair,

(*Ep.* 3)

That sire who sorely suffered by the spring
Where he would fain bind snake-haired Gorgon's son
Pegasus. Dreaming, he saw Pallas bring
The bridle that with golden frontlet shone :—
And lo, 'twas no dream ! ' Aiolid prince, awake thee ! '
She cried—' Receive this spell to charm yon steed.
To thine horse-taming Sire with this betake thee ;
There let a white bull on his altar bleed.'

(*Str.* 4)

Thus as he slumbered in the gloom of night,
The Maid of the Dark Aegis seemed to say.
Upleaping, on his feet he stood upright,
And seized the marvel that beside him lay.
Then joyously to Corinth's seer he wended,
And to the son of Koiranus he showed
How that strange venture of the night had ended,
How, trusting all the prophet did forebode,
He laid him down to sleep all through the night
Upon the altar in Athene's fane ;

How she, the Child of Him whose lance of light
Is levin, with her own hands did she deign

(*Ant.* 4)

To bring to him the spirit-taming gold.
The seer bade haste that vision to obey;
To the Wide-ruler who doth earth enfold
The bull, the mighty-footed beast, to slay;
And then to rear to Pallas chariot-reining
An altar. Ah, by power of Gods is brought
To pass a thing transcending prayers' attaining,
Transcending all hope—effortlessly wrought!
So was it now; for strong Bellerophon
With haste impetuous hied him forth to quell
That winged steed—lo, the victory was won
When touched his jaws the fury-stilling spell!

(*Ep.* 4)

He sprang on Pegasus' back; in brazen mail
Arrayed to play the play of swords he sped;
And riding on that steed did he assail
From the chill cloudland's folds untenanted
The Amazon host, the maids that bear the quiver;
Fire-breath'd Chimaera slew and Solymi.
That steed in Zeus's stalls abideth ever:—
His rider's doom I pass in silence by.

(*Str.* 5)

But, as I hurl the whizzing casting-spear,
My shaft beside the mark I may not speed.
To Song-queens splendour-throned with joy draws near
Their champion, and to Oligaithus' seed.
How oft at Nemea these have shone victorious
And at the Isthmus, all will I comprise
In few words: of the record passing-glorious
My tale a truthful witness ratifies,—
Ay, under oath,—that noble herald's tongue
Which published threescore victories in the names

Of this House—welcome-sweet his accents rung !—
When Nemea and the Isthmus held their games.
(*Ant.* 5)
Touching their victories at Olympia won,
Meseems, the tale already hath been told ;
And of the great deeds that shall yet be done,
Their tale hereafter shall my song unfold
Clearly. I hope now : with God lies the issue ;
But, if this House's fortune speed, I trow,
Zeus and the War-god's hands shall weave the tissue
Of that bright future. 'Neath Parnassus' brow
Six triumphs won they : all at Argos gained
And Thebes, and where by that Lykaian height
The altar royal unto Zeus ordained
Shall witness in Arcadia's people's sight,
(*Ep.* 5)
And in Pellene, Megara, Sikyon,
And in the Aiakids' close fair-walled around,
And at Eleusis, shining Marathon,
And towns by Etna's huge mass overfrowned,
Euboea—nay, all Hellas through, thy questing
Shall prove them countless. Zeus, who answerest prayer,
Light let their feet glide on ! Be honour resting
On these, all bliss be theirs and fortune fair !

Olympian XIV.

For Asopichus of Orchomenus, in Boeotia, on his victory in the Boys' short foot-race, B.C. 488 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

O ye who your lot by Kephisus have found,
Ye who dwell in the land where the swift horse races,
O bright Orchomenus' queens, ye Graces
Who compass the ancient Minyans round

With your guardian arms, O song-renowned,
Now hearken my prayer! By your bounty all pleasure,
All sweet things on menfolk descend in full measure,
All wisdom, all beauty, all fame with its splendour.
'Tis with help that the Graces, the worshipful, render
That the Gods' own dancings and feastings be holden;
Yea, these be dispensers of all things in Heaven.
By the side of the Lord of the bow all-golden,
Pythian Apollo, be thrones to them given;
The Olympian Sire are they ever adoring,
And his majesty's fountain for aye outpouring.

(*Str.* 2)

O Daughters of Zeus of the Gods most high,
Euphrosyne lover of song, and Aglaia,
And thou who dost joy in the chant, Thalia,
Hearken ye now to our suppliant cry!
Look down as our triumphing troop sweeps by,
As onward with lightsome foot it is pacing
The victor's fortune of happiness gracing.
I come hither the praise of Asopichus singing,
In Lydian measure my chant outringing,
For that now is the Minyan House victorious
By your grace at Olympia. Fly, Echo, telling
Unto old Kleodamus the tidings glorious
That shall brighten Persephone's dark-walled dwelling,
How his son in the Vale far-famous in story
Hath enwreathed his tresses with garlands of glory.

THE PYTHIAN ODES.

PYTHIAN I.

For Hiero, ruler of Syracuse, on his victory in the chariot-race, 470 B.C., in which he was proclaimed as 'of Etna,' a new city founded by him near Mt. Etna. In 480 B.C. he had defeated the Carthaginian invaders in the battle of Himera, and in 474 B.C., the Etruscans in a sea-fight off Cumae. In B.C. 475 there was a great eruption of Mt. Etna. All these events are referred to in this Ode.

(*Str.* 1)

O GOLDEN Lyre, who art Phoebus' treasure
Which he shares with the dusk-haired Song-queens aye,
The light feet hear thee beating the measure
As the revellers marshal their dance-array.
O Lyre, thy signals the singers obey
When in preludes of choral song low-dreaming
O'er thy strings quick-throbbing the harmonies glide.
Thou quenchest the thunderbolt's self red-gleaming
Javelined with flame-jets aye outstreaming.
On the sceptre of Zeus the slumber-tide
O'er his eagle ripples, on either side

(*Ant.* 1)

Of the king of birds as his pinions are trailing:
O'er his bowing head doth a dark mist flow
Sweet-sealing his eyes; 'neath sleep's prevailing
His back heaves wave-like soft and slow,
Spell-bound by thy melodies pulsing low.
Yea, the soul of the wild War-god lies sleeping
Hushed, warm-cradled in slumber's nest,

And his keen spear slips from his strong hand's keeping.
Gods' hearts are thy shafts in enchantment steeping
By the inspiration of Phoebus to rest
Lulled, and by the deep-bosomed Muses' behest.

(*Ep.* 1)

But creatures beloved not of Zeus, things haunting
Earth's crypts, and the sea's gulfs storm-uprolled,
Flee panic-struck, hearing the Pierids chanting,
As was Typhon, whom Tartarus' dread depths hold,
The hundred-headed, the hate undying
Of the Gods, in Cilician caverns of old
Nursed. Sicily now and her sea-defying
Cliffs above Kyme are heavily lying
On his shag-haired breast, and the cloud-kissing height
Of a crag-column crusheth him—Etna, white
Through the livelong year with snows that bite
With ice-fangs cold.

(*Str.* 2)

Upbelched from his deep-hidden crypts is a fountain
Of pure white fire none dare draw nigh.
In the day from the lava-flood rifting the mountain
Is the lurid smoke uptossed to the sky ;
In the darkness a red-rolling flame flares high
As it sweepeth the rocks with thunderous crashing
To the sea that afar below doth lie.
'Tis the monster upspurting through anguish-gnashing
Jaws that fire-fountain fearfully flashing—
A wondrous portent appalling the eye,
A marvel to hear when men pass by ;

(*Ant.* 2)

Such horror is prisoned through years unending
'Neath the heights dark-leaved in the earth's embrace,
While his back is furrowed with gory rending
By the flints of his restless resting-place !
O Zeus, may we in thy sight find grace

Who dost make this mountain thine habitation,
This rich land's forefront, whose namesake-town
Her founder ennobled, what time his nation
Was ' of Etna ' published by proclamation
Of the Pythian herald who spake the renown
Of Hiero's car-won victory-crown.

(*Ep.* 2)

As seafarers hail as the first boon of Heaven
That their sails by a fair-speeding wind be fanned
When the anchor is weighed, as an earnest given
Of yet fairer return to the home-land's strand,
So reason enkindleth the expectation
That with this fair fortune linked hand in hand
Shall the fame be of this thy new creation
For athletes and horses and glad celebration
Of her name by the singers. O Lycian King
And Delian, who lovest Castaly's spring,
Of thy goodwill vouchsafe it, and stablish the thing
For this hero-land.

(*Str.* 3)

'Tis the Gods that ope all paths unto mortals
Whereby unto excellence toilers attain ;
For poesy's, prowess's, eloquence' portals
They unbar. Albeit to praise I am fain
This hero, I trust I shall hurl not in vain
Wide of the lists my javelin, winging
From the hand that hath poised it its quivering flight,
Beyond all rivals my shaft far-flinging.
May the days through his life-tide be alway bringing
Wealth, bliss, in a course ever steered aright,
With oblivion of fortune's past despite.

(*Ant.* 3)

He shall surely recall the old wars' story—
He whose steadfast soul was their battle-stay,—

When his folk at the Gods' hands reaped for them glory
Such as none other Hellenes have borne away
From a stricken field, nor such goodly prey.
For, a new Philoktetes, with help all-availing
Battleward fared he, when came to implore
Humbly his friendship the proud ones, quailing
From foes over-strong—as the heroes went sailing
To Lemnos, to bring him to Troyland's shore
Whom the wound snake-venomed tormented sore,

(*Ep.* 3)

The archer, Poias' son, and he wended
Troyward, though sickness-worn was his frame,
And he ravaged the city of Priam, and ended
The Danaans' toil; for of Fate this came.
So by Hiero's side may a God go guiding
His steps, as in years past ever the same,
The desire of his heart in its season providing.
By Deinomenes'[1] side, O my Muse, abiding
Chant thou the meed by the chariot won
Of the father whose triumph is joy for the son.
This king, then, whose reign is in Etna begun,
Sing we his fame,

(*Str.* 4)

For whom, with freedom on God's rock grounded,
The statutes of Hyllus[2] pledged to maintain,
That city hath been by Hiero founded;
For the sons of Pamphylus are ever fain—
Yea, so is the line of the Herakleid strain
'Neath the beetling crags of Taÿgetus dwelling—
By Aegimius' Dorian laws to abide.

1. Son of Hiero, and ruler of Etna. The Deinomenes of l. 79 was the father of Hiero.

2. Hyllus was son of Herakles, and forefather of a Dorian tribe. Pamphylus was son of Aigimius the ally of Herakles, and forefather of another Dorian tribe which colonized Syracuse.

They gat them Amyklae, and prospered past telling
Who from Pindus down-swooping in glory excelling
By the Tyndarids dwelt, who on white steeds ride,
And their spear-fame as flower-studded meads blossomed wide.

(*Ant.* 4)

Zeus All-accomplisher, grant that never
May the tale of the fortunes of burgher and king
Be worser than now ; may they prosper ever
Where Amenas' waters are murmuring !
By thy grace may the old chief's counsels bring
To his son and his folk, with all honour, fruition
In their borders ever of concord and peace.
May the war-cry of Tuscan no more nor Phoenician
Be heard on our shores since battle's decision
By Cumae brought woe for lost ships upon these
Who in insolence claimed to be lords of the seas ;

(*Ep.* 4)

When the captain of Sicily's fleet on-leading
The might of Syracuse, hurled to the sea
Their warrior youths from their ships light-speeding,
And set you thereby, ye Hellenes, free
From thraldom's yoke hanging heavily o'er ye.
Yea, Athens and Sparta shall guerdon me
With thanks for my Salamis-lay, for the story
Of the battle before Kithairon,[1] the glory
Won when the Medes of the curved bow fell :
And by Himera's bank shall the song-flood swell
To Deinomenes' sons' battle-prowess, and tell
Of their victory.

(*Str.* 5)

If in season due be thy speech, if blended
Into close-knit order thy thoughts be, as when

1. The battle of Plataea, in 479 B.C., the year after Salamis.

A weaver upgathers his threads, attended
Shall thy words be with scantier cavil of men.
For if speech be tedious and long-drawn, then
Thine hearers' eager expectancy dieth.
And when burghers the praise of their fellows hear,
On their hearts a weight of jealousy lieth.
Yet better is envy than pity, which sigheth
Over failure. In justice thy folk do thou steer,
And in truth's forge fashion thy tongue's keen spear.

(*Ant.* 5)

How light soe'er be the word that hath flitted
From thy lips, it is weighty, as coming from thee.
To thy keeping a nation's weal is committed:
Of thy deeds, good or ill, many watchers there be.
Be thy spirit a flower of chivalry.
If thou wilt that report true-royal declare thee,
No niggard be thou: like a wise timoneer
Thy sails spread wide, that the breeze may bear thee
Onward. Let time-serving guile not ensnare thee
By flattery, friend! Nought save the sincere
Praise that, when mortals are no more here,

(*Ep.* 5)

Lives on after death, to the world revealeth
What their true life was whose days are sped,
And in chronicles shines and in lays outpealeth.
Blooms Croesus' kindness with petals unshed;
But Phalaris, ruthlessly joying in rending
Men's lives from the tortured in brass glowing red,
He is compassed with infamy's hate unending,
Nor lutes nor young voices in harmony blending
In the hall of the feasters his name shall greet.
Best of all is fair fortune; yet fame is sweet.
Who wins both, life's chief crowns all meet
To engarland his head.

Pythian II.

For Hiero of Syracuse, on his victory in a chariot-race, not at Pytho, but at Thebes, B.C. 475 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

O Syracuse, city in greatness excelling,
Precinct of Ares through gulfs of war
Who plungeth, O nurse of the warrior and steed
That in clash of the steel of battle-weed
Exult, from radiant Thebes do I speed
Bearing a song of the great race, telling
Of the swift earth-shaking four-horsed car,
The race wherein Hiero triumphward riding
Flashed down the course with his glorious team,
And crowned with garlands that glowed far-seen
Ortygia, the haunt of the River-queen
Artemis—aided of her, I ween,
His hands as with spells of enchantment were guiding
Those steeds with a bridle of rainbow-gleam ;

(*Ant.* 1)

For she, the arrow-triumphant Maiden,
And Hermes the Ruler of Contests, bring— 10
Yea, the gifts of the Gods' linked hands they are—
These harness-adornings that glitter afar
When he yokes strong steeds to his shining car
And its wheels rein-piloted, victory-laden,
Invoking the wide-ruling Trident-king.
The prowess-guerdon of song sweet-ringing
From the lips of many a bard shall swell
To the feet of lords that o'er far lands reign ;
As the Cyprian bards in triumphant strain
Chant Kinyras' praises once and again,
Aphrodite's priestly minion singing
Whom Apollo the golden-haired loved well ;

(*Ep.* 1)

For their gratitude's praise for his kindness is gushing
From the hearts in loving reverence bowed.
O Deinomenes' son, the Lokrian maid[1]
In the far west sings at her door unafraid
The delivering might of thine arm, that stayed
War's march of afflictions spirit-crushing,
That her eyes no longer are terror-cowed.
In old-time legend it stands recorded
That Ixion, the while on the fire-winged wheel
By the sentence of Gods he is endlessly whirled,
Ever shrieketh his warning, a cry that is hurled
Unto men's ears up from the underworld—
'Be the kindness of thy benefactors rewarded
With all the love that thine heart can reveal!

(*Str.* 2)

That lesson he learned in uttermost measure;
For, though he received a life of bliss
Mid the Children of Kronos, the gracious-souled,
He contented him not with its joys untold,
But for Hera he lusted frenzy-bold,
Of Zeus's couch the inviolate treasure;
For presumption drave him on into this
His overweening infatuation.
But swiftly he reaped meet harvest of sin
To suffer of all hell's torments the worst:
For his twofold transgression earned the Accurst
That vengeance—the one, that he was the first
Who stained mankind with contamination
Of the treacherous spilling of blood of kin;

(*Ant.* 2)

The other, that in the recesses most holy
Of the bride-bower of Zeus did he make essay

1. Western Lokris, in the south of Italy, had been saved from invasion by the intervention of Hiero.

Of the Queen of Heaven! Meet is it to know
Our mortality's limits, meet to forego
The lawless loves that their victim throw
Into gulfs of destruction. Such was his folly;
For with nought but a cloud it was that he lay,
Unknowing all, to his own confusion
Lured on by a sweetly-beckoning lie;
For the cloud-wrought image the semblance bare
Of Kronos' Child, Heaven's fairest fair;
For the hands of Zeus had fashioned the snare,
The beautiful bane, for his soul's delusion.
So he compassed his own dire doom thereby,

(*Ep.* 2)

Outstretched on the wheel's arms crucifying,
Tangled in bonds whence escape is none,
Shrieking that warning the whole world o'er.
And his cloud-mate, unblessed of the Graces, bore
A monstrous child—such dam never more
Nor such offspring shall be, 'neath a black curse lying
Of menfolk, of godfolk—a thing to shun!
And the cloud-mother reared that evil abortion
And named Kentaurus. By Pelion's foot
In Magnesia he mated with many a mare;
And a horde of monsters was born of them there
Wondrous to see, for the likeness they bare
Of either parent; the upper portion
As man was shapen, the nether as brute.

(*Str.* 3)

What purpose soever God conceiveth
He accomplisheth; none his intent may defy—
God, who o'ertaketh the eagle's wing,
Who outstrippeth the dolphin, o'er waves though it spring,
And the pride of man to the dust can bring,
While unto the lowly one glory he giveth
That waxeth not old as the years fleet by.

But for me is it well that I lack not discretion
From slander's viper-fangs to refrain.
Ay, venomous-tongued Archilochus' fate
Have I known from of old, and his low estate
Who with rancorous speech fed fat his hate.
Of all things that Fortune can give in possession
Riches with wisdom are best to attain.

(*Ant.* 3)

These blessings be thine, may all see plainly;
And this thou showest, O liberal-souled,
O princely ruler of many a street
Fair-circled with towers where thy squadrons meet;
And such riches and honour thy weal complete
That in fantasy's folly he striveth vainly
Who saith that any surpassed thee of old
Among Hellene lords that be famed in story.
On the prow of my galley with flowers hung round
Will I take my stand as the praises I sing
Of thy prowess. Young hearts win strengthening
From courage when trumpets for onset ring.
Yea, thou, I proclaim it, hast won thee glory
Therefrom, a glory that knows no bound,

(*Ep.* 3)

Now warring mid horsemen battleward racing,
And now mid warriors afoot that fight.
And thy wisdom now when thy locks be grey
Is of all gainsaying unperilled—O yea,
It giveth me fullest assurance aye
For extolling thy name with manifold praising.
All hail! This song o'er the sea-foam white
Like Tyrian merchandise lo, I have brought thee.
Let thine eyes then smile on the Kastor-strain
That my fingers from chords Aeolian drew:
O greet it thou with the honour due
To the seven-stringed lute. To thyself be true,
To the royal wisdom the years have taught thee.
'Tis from children alone that the ape doth gain

(*Str.* 4)

The praise of beauty, is beauteous ever!
Rhadamanthus is homed in the Isles of the Blest,
For the fruit of his soul was uncankered of guile:
No pleasure he hath in the treacherous wile
Of the whisperer working by calumnies vile.
The secret speakings of slander never
Can be openly fought and for ever repressed.
There is nothing of *man* in them—nay, 'tis the slinking
Spirit of foxes they show; and yet
From his cunning what gain doth the sly fox reap?
As for me—while the rest of the net-tackle deep
In the briny darkness doth toilsomely sweep
The sea-floor—I, like the float unsinking
Am riding the waves high over the net.

(*Ant.* 4)

In a city of honest men unavailing
Is the trickster's babble, yet still he essays,
Fawning on all men, the toils to twine
Of his subtlety. Never his vaunt shall be mine—
'To a friend be I friend, to a foe malign!
As a wolf will I covertly track him, assailing
This side and that side, by crooked ways.'
In what state soever a people be dwelling,
'Tis the man of straightforward speech alway
That unto the foremost place attains;
Whether it be where a despot reigns,
Or where the rabble hot-headed strains
Against use and wont, or where sages excelling
In wisdom the helm of the commonweal sway.

(*Ep.* 4)

Strive not against God, who exalts at his pleasure
Now one, now setteth another on high.
Yet doth not even His will seem right
Unto envious ones, but they strain over-tight
The line, and their own hearts so do they smite

With a wound whose bitterness none may measure,
Ere the prize be gained for the which they sigh.
Nay, better it is that a man bear lightly
The yoke of Fate on his neck that lies.
But he makes for his feet a perilous road
Who backward lashes against the goad.
But on me be this fair fortune bestowed,
To dwell among them which walk uprightly,
And to be well-pleasing in good men's eyes.

PYTHIAN III.

For Hiero of Syracuse, on victories won by his racehorse, Pherenikus, in 482 and 478 B.C. Probable date of Ode, 474, when Hiero was suffering from the disease of which he died in 467.

(*Str.* 1)

I WERE fain—if my tongue might breathe the prayer
Which on all lips trembles—that Philyra's son,
That yet alive old Cheiron were
Who perished from earth, ah, long agone,
Even heaven-born Kronos' seed, who of yore
A sceptre of wide dominion bore—
That now in the glens of Pelion
That man-brute reigned in the woods once more
Who was gracious-hearted to men when of old
He dwelt in the shadowy forest-land
Where he fostered Asklepius kindly-souled,
The lord of leechcraft, whose healing hand
From the limbs of the stricken banished pain
With salves by the which each malady's bane
From their frames was banned.

(*Ant.* 1)

The daughter of Phlegyas, lord of the car,
Not yet with help of the Travail-queen

Had borne that Healer renowned afar,
Ere by Artemis' golden arrows keen
In her bride-bower stricken to death she lay,
And trod the unreturning way
Unto Hades' halls; for Apollo had seen
The transgression that slew his love in a day.
For the wrath of the Sons of Zeus not in vain
Burns. In her folly she dared think scorn
Of his anger: unknown to her sire had she ta'en
To her arms a human lover, forsworn
To her bridal troth, to her plighted word,
To the love of Apollo the Archer-lord
Of the hair unshorn,

(*Ep.* 1)

Though she bare 'neath her zone a God's pure seed,
Yet the marriage-feast's coming she would not abide;
Not she of the full-voiced song took heed,
Such song as the young girl-mates of the bride
Merrily chant in the eventide.
But she longed for a love that was otherwhere
With the passion that oft is the soul's death-snare.
For a people foolish beyond compare
Is found among mortals, who scorn things near,
And gaze upon things that be far away,
And chase an ever-elusive prey
With hopes whose fulfilment shall never appear.

(*Str.* 2)

Even with such overmastering might
Did unbridled desire o'er the spirit sweep
Of Koronis in queenly vesture dight,
That she dared in the unblest couch to sleep
Of a stranger faring from Arcady.
But she 'scaped not the all-beholding eye
Of the God,—albeit where myriad sheep
To his altar at Pytho be led to die

Was the Lord of the Temple then,—for their lust
By the all-divining mind was descried.
To his soul's inner vision did Phoebus trust
As it were to a seer enthroned at his side.
He knows not delusion, whom neither man
Nor God by thought or by action can
Deceive or misguide.

(*Ant.* 2)

So when of her harlotry Phoebus was ware
With the stranger Ischys Eilatus' son,
And her godless guile in his sight lay bare,
Then sent he against that faithless one
His sister Artemis rushing with might
Of a Goddess whose arrows resistlessly smite
Unto Lakereia, by whose walls shine
The mere Boebeïs' waters bright,
Whereby did the woman unwedded abide
Whom her evil genius misled to the doom
Which destroyed her ; and many a neighbour died
With her, by her sin dragged down to the tomb,
As when on a mountain the fire that hath leapt
From one spark over a forest hath swept,
And doth wholly consume.

(*Ep.* 2)

But now when her kinsmen had laid the maid
In the midst of the pinewood walls of the pyre,
And when round about her upleaping played
The splendour-light of the Lord of Fire,
Spake Apollo : ' I will not by death so dire
Endure that mine own son also should die
In the flames wherein doth his mother lie ! '
He spake, and at one stride stood thereby,
And he caught up the child from the corse, and sprang
The flames asunder. That babe he brought
To Magnesia's Centaur, by him to be taught
To heal each mortal malady's pang.

(*Str.* 3)

And so what mortals soever sought
Unto him of the earth's afflicted ones,
Or with sores by nature's corruption wrought,
Or with limbs deep-gashed by the gleaming bronze,
Or the stone hurled far from the whirling sling,
Or through feverous summers languishing,
Or whom winter had cramped in sinews and bones,
He delivered them all, that leechcraft-king,
And loosed from their diverse infirmities
Or by spells with magic's nepenthe rife ;
Or a pain-lulling draught would he pour for these,
Or with salves that requickened the fainting life
The limbs of those would he swathe around,
Or for cureless sores was a remedy found
In the merciful knife.

(*Ant.* 3)

But alas for him, even leechcraft's lore
May be made the thrall of the lust of gain !
Even him did guerdon of golden ore,
In his palm as it glittered, seduce to his bane,
To bring back a man from the realm of the dead
Whom Hades already had captive led.
Wherefore Kronion smote those twain
With the vengeance-bolt from his hand swift-sped ;
And that all-dreaded thunder-stone
Dashed from their bosoms the breath for their sin.
From the Gods it behoves that we seek alone
Things meet for mortal spirits to win,
That, knowing what lies at the feet of man,
And discerning the bounds of our mortal span,
We abide therein.

(*Ep.* 3)

Covet not thou, O my soul, to live
The Immortals' life ! Let us use as we may

The means that Fate to our hands shall give.
Yet, if Cheiron the wise in his cave this day
Dwelt, and our honey-sweet songs might lay
On his spirit a spell that his will might bend,
I had won on him then some healer to send
To deliver from feverous pains my friend,
Such an one as Asklepius Apollo's son.
O'er Ionian waters voyaging
Oh then had I reached Arethusa's spring,
And to Etna's ruler, mine host, had I gone,

(*Str.* 4)

Who o'er Syracuse holdeth empery,
A king to his citizens gracious-souled;
Never jealous of good men's weal is he
Whom stranger-friends from far lands hold
As a father with worshipful marvelling.
O might I but land on his shores and bring
A twofold boon, even health's pure gold,
And the triumph-chant therewithal that I sing
To light with splendour the Pythian crown
Which his steed Pherenikus in days gone by
At Kirrha won for his lord's renown,
To my friend then, crossing the deep sea, I
Had come as a light clear-shining afar,
Ay, beaming brighter than any star
In yonder sky.

(*Ant.* 4)

Yet, unto the Mother, the Goddess adored,
For thine helping with prayers would I fain draw near,
Whose praises, with those of the Forest-lord,
Beside my portal chanted I hear
By maidens oft, when the night is still.
But, Hiero, seeing thyself hast skill
To interpret the lore of the ancient seer,
This knowest thou—*This is the high Gods' will*

To apportion alway afflictions twain
For each one boon that on man they bestow.
It is only the foolish who cannot sustain
With fit resignation their burden of woe:
But spirits heroic their sorrow can hide
'Neath a calm smile; so life's fairer side
To the world do they show.

(*Ep.* 4)

Yet on thee doth a lot of happiness wait;
For if upon any man She hath deigned
With favour to look, all-ruling Fate,
'Tis on him who over a nation hath reigned.
Nor Peleus nor Kadmus the godlike attained
To a life safeguarded from suffering aye:
Yet of all men these, as the old myths say,
To the highest happiness rose, for they
Heard the gold-tired Muses on Pelion
And in Thebes of the seven gates, when the bride
Of the one was Harmonia lovely-eyed,
And Thetis the Sea-queen Peleus won.

(*Str.* 5)

Yea, and the Gods sat at meat with these,
And the Sons of Kronos did they behold
As kings in the heavenly palaces
Seated upon their thrones of gold,
And received of them many a bridal gift;
And by Zeus were they saved from the stormy drift
Of woes overpast o'er their heads that had rolled;
And their hearts in gladness did they uplift.
Yet the days of their joyance were all too brief;
For the years drew nigh when Kadmus should see
His portion of happiness turned to grief
By the bitter travail of daughters three.
Yet Thyone the white-armed drew from above
Down to her couch by the spell of love
Zeus' majesty.

(*Ant.* 5)

And the son of Peleus, the only son
Whom Thetis the deathless Goddess bore
In Phthia to him—from that glorious one
The arrow in battle his sweet life tore ;
And the Danaans' wail rang loud, as they yearned
For their mightiest lost, on the pyre as he burned.
Now if any of mortals by wisdom's lore
The way of truth in his soul hath discerned,
Well may he be happy, if God bestow
The fortune fair by the Blessèd given.
Yet ever the blasts veer to and fro
Of the winds that fly o'er the fields of heaven.
Not long doth the bliss of mortals endure,
Yea, though it have come in full measure, and pure
From sorrow's leaven.

(*Ep.* 5)

Small shall I be if small my estate,
And great shall I grow if great it be.
What fortune soever for me may wait,
I will strive to adorn it worthily.
Should God grant easeful wealth unto me,
I would fain win fame too in oncoming days.
So Nestor and Lycian Sarpedon in lays
Ringing loud on the lips of men, have praise,
Whom we see as it were in temples enshrined
Uppiled by the master-builders of song ;
For through glorious strains liveth chivalry long—
But the path unto that fame few may find.

Pythian IV.

For Arkesilas of Kyrene, on his victory in the chariot-race, 462 B.C. The Ode is mainly taken up with the story of the Argonauts because one of them, Euphemus, was the ancestor of the kings of Kyrene, and his descendant Battus was the founder of the colony.

(*Str.* 1)

This day, O Muse, in the presence of a friend it behoves thee to stand,
Even the King of Kyrene, the goodly battle-steed's land,
That so, when Arkesilas leadeth the revel-dance sweeping along,
Thou at his side mayst be swelling the breeze of acclaiming song
Which is due unto Leto's children, to Pytho the temple due,
Where of old, when Apollo's presence was a glory that shone therethrough,
The priestess enthroned by the golden eagles of Zeus revealed
That Battus should found an empire in Libya's fruitful field,
Should depart from his hallowed island, and build on the gleaming height
Of the breast of the earth a city of chariots splendour-dight.

(*Ant.* 1)

In the seventeenth generation so should the word be fulfilled
Which at Thera Medea spake, which the daughter passionate-willed
Of Aietes, the Colchian princess, breathed from immortal lips
To the heroes that with Jason fared on the highway of ships :
' Hearken to me, ye scions of warriors mighty-souled,
Ye that of Gods be descended, to the thing of my tongue foretold :
Lo, from this land of Thera that is scourged by the brine of the sea
Shall in Epaphus' daughter Libya be planted in days to be
A root that shall grow into cities that mortals shall hold full dear,
To the temple-foundations of Ammon, of Libyan Zeus, lying near.

(*Ep.* 1)

And instead of the short-finned dolphin shall they take the fleetfoot steed,
Wield reins instead of the oar-blade, drive chariots of whirlwind speed.
For by that augury-token fulfilled shall be Thera's fate
To become the mother-city of burgs exceeding great,
That token the which aforetime at Tritonis the mere's outflow
On Euphemus who leapt from Argo did a God of the sea bestow,

A God who in man's shape proffered a clod of earth for his gift :
And Zeus Kronion thundered approval thereof from the lift.

(*Str.* 2)

For he lighted on us, that stranger, as the men were in act to hang
Upon Argo's side the anchor, the curb of the brazen fang.
Over ridges of homeless desert had they borne for twelve days' space
Away from the Ocean the galley that wont o'er the sea to race ;
For they haled her ashore, obeying the counsel spoken of me.
Then came that Solitary, the Triton-god of the sea,
Wearing the splendid semblance of a worship-worthy man,
And with words of kindly welcome his utterance began,
Such speech as of hosts good-hearted is spoken, when such draw near
Unto far-travelled guests, and bid them to taste of the banquet's cheer.

(*Ant.* 2)

Howbeit for that guest-feasting the heroes might not stay,
For the lure of the sweet home-coming beckoned them ever away.
But Eurypylus he named him, deathless Earthshaker's son,
Born of the Land-enfolder : yet marking our haste to begone,
He put forth his hand, and straightway caught up from the earth a clod
As it lay at his feet, and proffered the same as the gift of a god.
Nor scorned it Euphemus, but leaping from Argo's deck to the strand
He received that fateful guest-gift, and clasped the giver's hand.
But alas, it abode not with us ! Washed over the galley's side
It fleeted away on the sea-brine in the dusk of eventide

(*Ep.* 2)

Adrift on the heaving outsea : yet laid I once and again
My charge to watch it safely on our helpers the serving-men :
But ah, they forgat ! So on Thera's isle the unperishing seed
Of Libya the wide is upwashen before the time decreed.
For if only Euphemus, the scion of Poseidon the chariot-lord,—
Whom Europa Tityos' daughter bare on the margent-sward
Of Kephisus,—to Tainarus speeding, there in the homeland had hurled
That clod through the chasm-portals of Hades' underworld,

(*Str.* 3)

Then in the fourth generation the sons of his blood had ta'en
With the Danaans' help possession of Libya's boundless plain ;

For then from great Lacedaemon, from Argos' wide-mouthed bay
And Mycenae, had warriors thither fared in a mighty array.
But, as things have befallen, Euphemus shall wed with an alien dame,
And shall win him from those espousals a chosen seed of his name
The which, of the high Gods honoured, shall come unto Thera's strand
And beget a man to be ruler of that cloud-shadowed land :
Unto him in the hall of Phoebus, the temple rich in gold,
Shall the word of the revelation of an oracle be told,

(*Ant.* 3)

When in days to come he descendeth into the sanctuary
At Pytho, bidding him carry a host of men oversea
To Kronion's fertile precinct that lieth beside the Nile.'
Even such was the chant prophetic that Medea uttered, the while
Moveless sitting in silence the heroes bowed the head,
And hearkened the counsel of wisdom that breathed in the words that she said.
Blest scion of Polymnestus, of no man save of thee
The oracle told that glory by the voice of the Delphic Bee
With utterance unprompted ; and ' All hail ! ' thrice she cried,
And proclaimed thee the destined ruler of Kyrene's kingdom wide,

(*Ep.* 3)

When thou camest to ask what healing the Gods would grant of their grace
For thy stammering tongue. Of a surety now in the latter days,
As when mid the springtide's roses a burgeoning tree is seen,
So, eighth in the line of Battus, Arkesilas' leaf is green.
Even him did Apollo and Pytho cause to be triumph-renowned
In the chariot-race in the presence of all folk dwelling around.
I will hymn his fame to the Song-queens, and will sing of the Golden Fleece,
Of the Minyans' Quest and the sowing of god-given glory for these.

(*Str.* 4)

What Power overshadowing lured them forth on the sea-track long ?
What peril to that Quest bound them with clamps as of adamant strong ?
A god-given oracle boded that Pelias should die
By the hands of Aiolus' children, or their merciless subtlety.
Yea, a prophecy came to him chilling the heart of the crafty-souled ;
From the mid-stone of Earth-mother vestured with trees was the word outrolled :

'Above all things else beware thou with uttermost heed,' said the God,
'Of the man that from highland homesteads with single sandal shod
Unto far-renowned Iolkos of the sunny plains shall fare,
Be he a man of thy country, or stranger from otherwhere.'

(*Ant.* 4)

At the last was he come, a hero of wondrous-mighty frame;
With lances twain that quivered in his iron grasp he came.
And twofold vesture arrayed him; the garb of the Magnete folk
To his goodly limbs close-lapping clung; but tossed like a cloak
O'er his shoulders a pard's fell screening from arrowy showers lay.
From the glory of his bright tresses nought had been shorn away,
But unminished, a rippling splendour, adown his back they shone.
With feet unfaltering straightway and swiftly strode he on,
And he stood, as one that proveth a spirit of peril uncowed,
In the midst of the place of folkmote filled with its thronging crowd.

(*Ep.* 4)

And no man knew him; but awestruck they gazed, and one spake word:
'Of a surety is this not Apollo, nor Aphrodite's lord
Of the chariot of brass! And Otus, and Ephialtes thou
The dauntless, in gleaming Naxos perished long ere now.
Ye sons of Iphimedeia; nor Tityos could outrun
The arrow as lightning leaping the heart of the quarry that won,
Which Artemis out of her quiver invincible sped, that man
Might be warned to grasp not at dalliance beyond our mortal span.'

(*Str.* 5)

So spake they each unto other, questioning, answering thus.
But now cometh Pelias speeding with haste impetuous
His mules and his polished chariot—suddenly stayed he and stared
In amaze at the one foot sandalled of the man with the left foot bared,
The unmistakable token! Howbeit he hid in his heart
His dread, and he spake: 'Thou stranger, say of what land thou art,
And what is thy fatherland tell me! What womb gave thee birth?
What giantess was thy mother of the ancient children of Earth?
Speak out! Of thy lineage tell us; and see that thou do not defile
Thy lips with words of feigning, with falsehoods loathsome-vile!'

(*Ant.* 5)

But unafraid that stranger answering spake to the king
With unangry words: 'The wisdom of Cheiron hither I bring:
From Chariklo and Philyra's presence, from the cave of the shadows I come
Whom the Centaur's stainless daughters reared in their mountain-home.
Years twice ten there I accomplished, and never deed or word
In truth or in honesty lacking in me have they seen or heard.
And hither I come returning to this the home of my race
To win me back the honour that in unforgotten days
Was my sire's, which a godless usurper out of his hands hath torn,
The honour to Aiolus granted of Zeus, by his sons to be borne.

(*Ep.* 5)

For I hear how the lawless-hearted, one Pelias, lured astray
By the lusts of his envy, by violence snatched the sceptre away
From my father and mother, to whom it pertained by ancestral right.
These, dreading the tyrant's outrage, so soon as I looked on the light,
As though for a new-dead dear one, made dusky-garbed lament,
And amid wild wailing of women the babe from the home they sent
Swaddled in purple swathings, by paths Night knew alone;
And to Cheiron they gave me to foster, to the Centaur, Kronos' son.

(*Str.* 6)

Now therefore of this my story the sum and the substance ye know;
And I pray you, O kindly burghers, to me do ye plainly show
The dwelling wherein my fathers, lords of white steeds, abode;
For the feet of a son of Aison shall surely not have trode
Upon alien soil in the homeland, the land I claim for mine!
Jason my name is: the Centaur named me with lips divine.'
Then his father's eyes, as he entered the old home, knew him again,
And gushed from his aged eyelids the tears like summer rain;
For his spirit rejoiced within him when he beheld that son,
The chiefest among ten thousand, the goodliest-moulded one.

(*Ant.* 6)

And the brethren twain of the father came thither the son to greet,
So soon as they heard the tidings of his home-returning feet.
Not from afar came Pheres from Hypereia's spring:
From Messene fared Amythaon: Admetus hastening

Thitherward came with Melampus, and greeted lovingly
Their kinsman. And while they feasted, with gracious courtesy
Did Jason commune with them ever, and he made them abundant cheer,
And he lengthened out all joyance of the hearts that held him dear :
For five long nights together, five days, did the hero abide
Still plucking the consecrated flowers of the festal tide.

(*Ep.* 6)

But with earnest speech on the sixth day at last did Jason begin
To set forth from the beginning the whole tale unto his kin.
And these to his counsel consented : from the banqueting-couch straight-
With these he uprose ; to the palace of Pelias on passed they. [way
And they hasted and stood there ; and hearing them, came to meet the men
That son of Tyro the lovely-haired. Spake Jason then,
And of wise speech laid the foundation, with words of unangry tone
Soft-flowing : ' Son of Poseidon the Cleaver of crag-piled stone,

(*Str.* 7)

The spirits of men run swiftly, too swiftly they run on the path
Of the wages of treachery, rather than guerdons that justice hath ;
Yet their lives glide on to the reckoning stern that for all doth remain.
But thee and me it behoveth by law our passions to rein,
And for days to come to be weaving the web of our well-being so.
One mother had our forefathers—this I would say dost thou know—
Rash-hearted Salmoneus and Kretheus ; and we who in these days see
Helios' majesty golden, of the third generation are we.
Now if there arise black hatred 'twixt mortals by blood akin,
Far off stand the Destiny-weavers, to see not the shame and the sin.

(*Ant.* 7)

Us twain it beseemeth in no wise with spear or with bronze-forged sword
To apportion the goodly honour of our fathers' treasure-hoard ;
Nor needeth it—lo, all sheep-flocks and tawny herds of kine
I yield unto thee, and the pastures and tilth-lands, still to be thine,
Whereof thou hast spoiled my parents, and ever art swelling thy store.
O yea, and it nowise vexeth my soul that of these evermore
Thou increasest thine house's riches :—but the kingly sceptre and throne
Whereon the son of Kretheus sat in the days bygone,

And over a nation of horsemen ruled in equity,
Even these without malice between us yield unto him and to me,

(*Ep.* 7)

Lest out of it some new mischief should spring up.' Thus he spake.
And with words that peaceably sounded did Pelias answer make :
' I will be as thou wilt : but already is old age compassing
Mine head ; but thy life is waxing in the flower-tide of thy spring ;
And strength is thine for appeasing the Powers of the world below ;
For unto the halls of Aietes Phrixus biddeth us go
To lead homeward his spirit, and hither the fell thick-fleeced to bear
Of the Ram from the sea that saved him, from his stepdame's impious snare.

(*Str.* 8)

Such was the strange hest spoken by a voice in a dream that came.
And to Kastaly's oracle also have I sent to enquire of the same,
Whether truly the quest should be ventured ; and the oracle biddeth me
To make ready with speed a galley to bring these home oversea.
This emprise do thou accomplish of free will : then, when again
Thou comest, I swear to yield thee the throne thereon to reign.
And let Zeus himself be the witness, that the oath-pledge firm may be,
Zeus, the ancestral father of the race of thee and me.'
So in peace they parted, consenting that so should the covenant stand.
Then Jason sent heralds to publish the Quest through every land.

(*Ant.* 8)

And lo, three sons of Kronion came at his call straightway :
No labour of battle could tire them, seed of the Highest they !
The one of Alkmena the star-eyed was born, and of Leda twain.
And there came two heroes with helmets tossing the stormy mane ;
And these were the Earth-shaker's scions, and honour was blent with their might.
Thither they journeyed from Pylos and Tainarus' foreland-height.
Perfected so is the glory that thou, Euphemus, hast found,
And thine, Periklymenus, peerless in prowess far-renowned.
And, sped by Apollo thither, the master of harp-strings came,
The father of song, even Orpheus of unforgotten fame.

(*Ep.* 8)

And of Hermes, the Lord of the Golden Sword, have two sons gone
To the toil wherefrom no respite was given, Echion the one,
And the other Eurytus, joying in the strength of life's spring-day.
And swiftly came from their dwelling at the roots of Pangaius that lay
Zetes and Kalais : gladly their father Boreas, king
Of the Winds, arrayed them in pinions on their shoulders fluttering.
Hera it was that enkindled the yearning whose strong spell drew
All these demigod heroes to be of Argo's crew;

(*Str.* 9)

That none by the side of his mother be left still drowsing on
In a sodden life unperilled, but, though through death it were won,
Along with the rest his compeers he should find in the land oversea
And drain the magic chalice of the glory of chivalry.
So came they, the flower of all shipmen, down to Iolkos' shore ;
And the tale of them all told Jason, and thanked them o'er and o'er.
And his helper Mopsus the prophet enquired the will of Heaven,
For he noted the tokens of bird-flight and hallowed lots that were given ;
Then joyfully cried to them : ' Get you aboard, for the hour is now ! '
And they heaved and hung the anchor over the galley's prow.

(*Ant.* 9)

Then a golden bowl their chieftain took in his hands, and high
On the stern unto Zeus the Father of the Heavenly Ones did he cry,
Unto him whose lance is the lightning ; to the rushing feet did he pray
Of the waves, and the wild wind-pinions, to speed them on their way ;
To the nights and the great deep's highways he prayed, that the days
Gracious, and kindly the fortune of the home-return oversea.
And a voice of thunder propitious out of the welkin crashed,
And dazzling gleams of lightning from the rifted cloud-walls flashed.
And the heroes breathed more lightly, their hearts with comfort glowed,
For they put their trust in the tokens that God from his heaven forth-showed.

(*Ep.* 9)

And of hopes with fear unmingled the seer spake, while he bade
To smite with the oar the waters : the swiftly-flashing blade

Swung by their hands untiring over the sea sped on,
And the south-wind onward-wafting blew ; and so they won
To the mouth of the Sea Unfriendly : there made they a holy place
To the Lord of the Deep ; and a red-felled herd of the bulls of Thrace
Was there, and a new-built altar of stone with a basin therein.
And now, as they sped on, deeper they plunged into peril's gin.

(*Str.* 10)

But they cried to the Lord of Shipmen to bring them safely through
The resistless rush of the Countering Rocks ; for these were two,
And alive they were, and onward they rolled more fearful-fast [210
Than the thunderous-roaring battalions of winds ; but death at the last
By the demigods' voyage was dealt them. To Phasis then came they,
And there with the swart-faced Colchians they clashed in battle-play,
Yea, in the very presence of King Aietes. Then
The Queen of the Darts keen-piercing brought from Olympus to men
That dappled bird of the madness of love, the wryneck, and bound
Was the thing by the Lady of Cyprus on a wheel whirled ceaselessly round

(*Ant.* 10)

From whose arms there was no escaping ; and she was the first that brought
Unto earth that charm. And to Aison's son the Goddess taught
The Suppliant's Incantation, whose glamour should cause to depart
All reverent love of parents out of Medea's heart,
That a longing for Hellas might lash her with Suasion's whip, till afire
Was her soul. And she straightway taught him to achieve the tasks that
her sire 220
Had appointed to him ; for she blended in magical wise with oil
Strange drugs to anoint him, counter-spells for the fiery toil.
And therewithal these vowed them each unto other to be
Linked in the bands delightsome of spousal unity.

(*Ep.* 10)

But when in the midst Aietes had set the adamant plough
And the bulls, which out of their glowing jaws were breathing now
The flame of a fire fierce-burning, as hoof after hoof of them stamped
On the shuddering ground, as with brazen feet they heavily tramped,
Then, unholpen of any, he led them to the yoke ; straight furrows he drew,
And up from a trench of a fathom deep huge clods he threw.

Thereafter he cried his challenge : ' This work now let your king,
Whosoe'er hath command of your galley, to its accomplishment bring,

(*Str.* II)

And so bear off for his guerdon the unperishing coverlet,
Even the Fleece with golden-gleaming tassels beset.'
As he spake it, his saffron mantle did Jason cast aside,
And trusting in God he grappled with the task, and the rushing tide
Of flame played on him unquailing, for magic wrapped him round [bound
By the spells of the sorceress-stranger. He seized the plough, and he
The bulls' necks fast in the harness, he stabbed each strong-ribbed frame
With the merciless goad ; and so to the end of the set task came
That stalwart hero. Aietes, in amazement's agony,
Beholding the might of the stranger, gasped a wordless cry.

(*Ant.* II)

Then to the strong-limbed hero, in token of love that they bare,
Stretched forth their hands his comrades, and crowned with garlands his hair,
And with loving praises they hailed him, and glad acclaiming shout.
Then straightway the wondrous scion of Helios pointed out
The place where the golden-gleaming Fleece was hung, wide-strained
By the falchion of Phrixus : he trusted the goal should ne'er be attained
Of that last toil by the stranger : in a tangled thicket it lay
In a ravening dragon's warding whose jaw-teeth gripped it aye ;
And in length and in breadth was he greater than a galley fifty-oared
Welded by iron mallets with blow upon blow down-poured.

(*Ep.* II)

Too long for me is the wheel-rutted track, for the sands run low
Of time ; moreover a certain short bypath I know
Who am leader in song unto many. The serpent lurid-eyed,
Iridescent-scaled, by the magic spells of the hero died,—
O Arkesilas ;—and aided of Medea, he stole her, and fled
With her who was Pelias' death-snare. Through Ocean's deeps they sped
And the Red Sea ; thence to the husband-slayers in Lemnos they came.
There strove they for guerdons of raiment in many an athlete-game,

(*Str.* 12)

And they couched with the women : in alien furrows there did they sow
By night or by day the fateful seed of the bright sun-glow
Of your line's fair fortune. Planted there was Euphemus' race,
Destined to fadeless increase through ever-during days.
In the homesteads of Lacedaemon the wanderers tarried awhile ;
In Thera thereafter abode they, once named Kalliste's Isle.
Thence was it the Son of Leto led your sires oversea,
And gave them the plains of Libya, to bring prosperity
To the land by god-given honours, and to rule o'er the hallowed town
Of golden-throned Kyrene, the Nymph of old renown,

(*Ant.* 12)

Having devised for it counsel that ruleth in righteousness aye.
Now learn thou of Oedipus' wisdom :[1]—' *If one should shear away*
With the axe keen-cleaving the branches of a stately oak, and bring
To shame its glorious beauty, even in the perishing
Of its fruitage, it still giveth token of that which it was of old,
Yea, though it should come to the hearth-fire at last in the winter's cold,
Or whether, a great beam resting athwart the columns tall
That bear the weight of the rafters of a proud lord's feasting-hall,
It doeth slavish service walled in 'twixt roof and floor,
And the place that knew it aforetime shall know it again no more.'

(*Ep.* 12)

A physician thou art most timely ; the light that from thee doth pour
The Healer-god honours. For tending a deeply festering sore
One needeth a hand most gentle. The weakest fool may shake
A state to its very foundations ; but hard is the struggle to make
It again in its place stand firmly, unless God hasten to be
Unto its rulers a pilot o'er discord's stormy sea.
But for thee is the vesture woven of such fair fortune. Be strong
In thy striving to stablish Kyrene in weal to continue long ;

1. Here begins Pindar's intercession for the forgiveness and restoration to his country of Demophilus, an exiled Kyrenian noble living in Thebes, at whose instance the poet wrote this ode, which was designed as a peace-offering to king Arkesilas.

(Str. 13

And of Homer's sayings ponder them this with diligent heed —
'*A prudent messenger bringeth*,' he saith, '*unto many dead*
Honour exceeding goodly.' By a message rightly told
The Muse herself is exalted. Now Kyrene knoweth of old
And the world-famed hall of Battus knoweth how righteously
Demophilus ruled his spirit: a youth mid the youths was he
In years, albeit in counsel was he as an elder of days.
Yea, as one that through years a hundred hath run his weary race
He silenceth slander: her blatant tongue is loud no more
And insolence overweening hath he throughly learned to abhor.

(Ant. 13)

He contendeth not with the noble: he lingereth no long space
In bringing a work to fulfilment:—for Opportunity stays
By a man but a fleeting moment: well is it marked of him still
How it waiteth on him as a helper, not as the slave of his will.
Of all gifts this is the saddest, to know what is best for man.
And yet that Fate the tyrant thy winning thereto should ban.
Ay, Atlas still stands straining beneath heaven's crushing load
From all his possessions exiled, from his ancestral abode.
Yet by Zeus ever-living the Titans were unchained: and as on time fleets,
With the lulling and veering of breezes may the shipmen shift the sheets.

(Ep. 13

And this thy banished one prayeth that, now that his cup of pain
Hath been drained to the dregs, he may look on the home of his youth.
May have part by Apollo's fountain in the feast, may yield his heart
To the joyance of youth, and mid bunchers wise in the minstrel's art
May hold in his hands the cithern cunningly carved, and to peace
May attain, doing hurt unto no man, and injured by none of these.
And shall tell how fair a fountain of song immortal he found
For Arkesilas, late welcomed by a friend on Theban ground.

PYTHIAN V.

For Arkesilas of Kyrene, on the same victory as the preceding ode. It was sung at Kyrene on the return of the charioteer Karrotos, the king's brother-in-law and owner of the winning team, according to the scholiast. He brought back his crown, but the chariot remained at Delphi, consecrated to Apollo.

(*Str.* 1)

FAR REACHING power has wealth for him to whom
It comes, a gift that Destiny sends
With stainless honour linked: so leads he home
A charm that wins him friends.
Thou, O Arkesilas the heaven-blest,
Since from its first steps glory crowned
Thy life, hast held that boon of Heaven in quest,
Hast sought fair fame, and found,
With aid of Kastor of the chariot golden,
Who bade the wintry tempest cease,
And sheds upon thine hearthstone thine enfolden
Sunlight of skies of peace.

(*Ant.* 1)

Whoso are noble bear with fairest grace
Such power as God bestows on thee;
And thou on paths of righteousness dost pace
Crowned with prosperity;
For over mighty cities king thou art;
And thy discernment eagle-eyed,
Intent with thee, hath wedded to thine heart
Honour as to a bride.
And this day crowns thy bliss with triumph glorious
In Pythian Games by fleet steeds won.
Now hast thou welcomed home the chant victorious
As sweeps the revel on,

(*Ep.* 1)

Praises' delight! so, when the song they raise
Around Kyrene's garden fair

Of Aphrodite, to give God the praise
For all, have thou a care.
And hold Karrhotus dearest friend, who brought
Not back, to cloak disaster's shame,
Excuse, the child of late-wise Afterthought,
When to the halls he came
Of Battus' sons, whose just rule lives in story;
But, hailed her guest by Kastaly's Spring,
Won for thee with his car a crown of glory—
Thy car all-conquering!

(*Str.* 2)

With reins unsnapped through all that hallowed space
Around the courses twelve he swung,
Nor car nor harness brake he in the race,
But dedicate hath hung
On Phoebus' wall the craftsmen's masteries
Riding whereon he passed ere then
The hill of Krisa to the plain that lies
In the God's bosomed glen.
The cypress shrine now hath them in possession
By that self-moulded statue placed
Which Cretan bowmen 'neath the roof Parnassian
Unto the God upraised.

(*Ant.* 2)

Beseems that with blithe heart thou welcome one
Who hath done thee such service fair.
Splendour ye shed on Alexibius' son,
O Graces of bright hair!
O happy thou, that after labour sore
Thou hast the praise of noblest song
To keep thy memory green! Mid those twoscore
Drivers, who mid the throng
Were hurled to earth, thou with a heart undaunted
Didst drive unscathed thy chariot on,
And now to Libya from Games glory-haunted
And thy sires' home hast won.

(*Ep.* 2)

No man is now, nor shall be, portionless
Of trouble: yet on Battus' line
Still waits the olden bliss, though happiness
And grief may intertwine.
Kyrene's warder-tower is this, a light
Of splendour on the stranger shed.
Yea, thunder-throated lions in affright
From Battus' outcry fled—
That voice from overseas! Your founder Apollo
Thrilled them with dread, that on the word
Of prophecy might sure fulfilment follow
For him, Kyrene's lord.

(*Str.* 3)

'Tis Phoebus gives to men and women skill
To heal all manner of disease;
He gave the lyre, he teacheth whom he will
All Song's sweet melodies.
Into men's hearts Fair Governance he brings,
Mother of peace: o'er Pytho's cell
He broodeth, whence his voice prophetic rings.
In Sparta he made dwell,
In Argos, Pylos' hallowed town, undaunted
Herakles' and Aigimius' line.
Now Sparta's dear renown must needs be chanted
By her son's lips, yea, mine.

(*Ant.* 3)

Thence my forefathers sprang, the Aigeïdae,
Who, by the Gods' grace destiny-led,
To Thera fared of old, whence also we
That Feast inherited
Of sacrifice wherein all people share,
And in thy feast Karneian, King
Apollo, of Kyrene builded fair
The glorious honour sing,

Where dwell the brazen-harnessed Trojan strangers,
Antenor's sons, who fled the war
Wherein they saw Troy burnt, and came, sea-rangers,
With Helen from afar.

(*Ep.* 3)

Kind welcome to that chariot-driving band
With gifts and sacrifice they gave
Whom Aristoteles brought to Libyan land
In swift ships o'er the wave,
Cleaving a deep path through the sea, and made
Greater the temple-groves divine,
And for the festival-processions laid
A paved road's level line
For trampling steeds, and pilgrims magnifying
Apollo, Helper of our race.
There now in death apart is Battus lying
Hard by the market-place.

(*Str.* 4)

Blest was he while with men he found a home:
All reverence him, their hero, yet.
Apart from him is each king's hallowed tomb
Before the palace set.
To them in Hades wins some echo through—
If such life-music reach the dead—
How prowess is besprent with kindly dew
Of victory-song outshed.
So theirs too is Arkesilas' triumph-story,
The fame that justice doth award.
While chant the youths, 'tis meet he sing the glory
Of Phoebus Golden-sword,

(*Ant.* 4)

He whom glad Pythian songs immortalize—
The victor's guerdon for all pains.
I but repeat the praises of the wise
In these my triumph-strains.

His mind, his tongue, transcend his spring of life ;
In courage as a broad-winged erne
Mid weakling fowl, a tower in athlete-strife
No strength can overturn.
Even from his mother's knee did he give token
Of wings with my Song-queens to soar :
Of his car-driving skill the praise is spoken
By this the wide world o'er.

(*Ep.* 4)

And all paths that exalt his Libyan home
Hath he essayed. Now graciously
God perfecteth his powers. Through years to come,
Blest Kronos' Sons, do ye
Vouchsafe to him alike with hand and mind
Still to excel. May his work stay,
Wrecked by no blast of devastating wind
In his life's autumn-day.
The mighty mind of Zeus is ever guiding
Their destiny whom he loveth well.
To Battus' seed may he grant fame abiding
Also in Pisa's dell.

PYTHIAN VI.

For Xenocrates of Akragas, in Sicily, on the victory in the chariot-race won by his son, Thrasybulus, 490 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

HEAR ! for our ploughshare is sundering
The glebe-furrows of starry-eyed
Aphrodite, where Graces guide
Our feet drawing nigh to the shrine
At the navel of earth hollow-thundering,
Where for Emmenus' heaven-blest line

And for Akragas' city enfolden
By her river, and, more than all,
For Xenocrates, riseth the hall
Of a treasure-house song-upholden
In Apollo's glen of the golden
Gifts gracing his temple-wall.

(*Str.* 2)

That treasure no rain-storm, hurling
Its pitiless hosts from the cloud
Amid thunders crashing loud
Shall sweep to abysses of sea
By the storm-wind with shingle-drift swirling;
But the porch of our treasury
In brightness unsullied shall flame, it
Shall publish the triumph afar,
Thrasybulus, won by thy car
In Krisa; and men shall acclaim it
For thy sire and thy kindred, shall name it
Their glory, their splendour-star.

(*Str.* 3)

At thy right hand thou settest him ever,
And so by the charge dost thou hold
Which of yore mid the hills, it is told,
To Achilles the child left lone
Did Philyra's son deliver,
Unto Peleus' mighty son:
'First of Abiders in Heaven
Kronion do thou adore
Lord of the thunder's roar,
And be reverence alway given
Unto thy parents, even
To the end, till life be o'er.'

(*Str.* 4)

This selfsame spirit aforetime
Did mighty Antilochus bear:
For his father's sake did he dare

That Aethiop chief's death-stroke
When Memnon prevailed in the war-time.
For trammelled was Nestor's yoke
By the steed on the red earth lying
By the arrow of Paris shot.
Ever nearer was havoc wrought
By the lance that Memnon was plying;
And the sire to his son spake, crying
For help, being terror-distraught.

(*Str.* 5)

That cry on the air was not wasted;
But withstanding a mightier alone,
His father's life with his own
That godlike son redeemed,
And death's cup of glory he tasted.
So in after days he seemed
To the sons of each new generation
In those old times bygone
Ever the noblest son
In filial love's consecration.
Now—by none out of any nation
Is Thrasybulus outdone

(*Str.* 6)

In the duty ordained of our fathers.
With his sire's brother's glory he vies,
Is in usance of wealth ever wise,
Nor in arrogance lawlessly
Grasps at youth's pleasures, but gathers
Flower-wisdom of poesy
To the Muses' hid garden ascending.
And he draweth nigh unto thee,
O Earth-shaker, Lord of the sea,
In thy chariot-contests contending.
More sweet is his guest-befriending
Than the celled honeycomb of the bee.

Pythian VII.

For Megakles of Athens (which had ostracised him a few months before this), on his victory in the four-horse chariot-race, 486 B.C.

(*Str.*)

No fairer prelude of the minstrel's victory-chant can be
Than praise of Athens' mighty town,
When he would hymn the far-prevailing Alkmaionidae,
And their swift steeds' renown.
Yea, for what fatherland, what habitation,
O singer, canst thou name
That doth transcend, through all the Hellene nation,
Fair Athens' fame?

(*Ant.*)

There is no city but therethrough doth that proud story ring
Of King Erechtheus' burghers told,
Who made thy shrine in hallowed Pytho, Phoebus Harper-King,
A marvel to behold.
In Isthmian contests five were ye victorious
Inspiring the bard's strain;
At Zeus' Olympian Feast one prize most glorious,
At Kirrha twain,

(*Ep.*)

Thou and thy sires, O Megakles, achieved.
In your fair fortune I delight,
Yet for the recompense my soul is grieved
That envy doth requite
Your noble deeds withal. Yet long-enduring
Prosperity still brings, they say,
Evil with good; for there is no assuring
That bliss shall stay.

Pythian VIII.

For Aristomenes of Aegina, on his victory in the Boys' wrestling-match, 446 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

O gentle-hearted Queen of Peace, thou Daughter
Of Righteousness, to greatness dost thou raise
Cities: of counsel calm and war's mad slaughter
The master-keys thou holdest. Of thy grace
Welcome the praise
Of Aristomenes, in athlete-strife
Won at the Pythian Games. Thou knowest truly
How to receive and give in season duly
The kindly courtesies that sweeten life.

(*Ant.* 1)

Yet thou, whenever any man hath driven
Thine heart to righteous wrath, relentlessly,
Sternly against the might of foes hast striven:
Their insolence into the abyss of sea
Is hurled by thee.
Porphyrion had not learned thy mighty sway
When he provoked thy spirit overmeasure.
If willing be the giver, precious treasure
Is that which the receiver bears away.

(*Ep.* 1)

But violence bringeth low the fool high-vaunting
At last. Cilicia's spawn, that demon-thing,
Typhoeus hundred-headed, spirit-daunting,
Escaped not thee, nor yet the Giants' king,
Whom lightning's wing
And Phoebus' shafts o'erthrew, though ne'er so strong.
Phoebus received with gracious condescending
Xenokrates' son home from Kirrha wending
Crowned with Parnassian wreaths and Dorian song.

(*Str.* 2)

Ne'er hath she lost the favour of the Graces,
That isle which aye doth public faith uphold.
The Aiakids' glory never she effaces:
Her fame abideth flawless as is told
In songs of old.
Rings down the years the music of her name:
They hymn the nurse of many an heir of glory
Who reaped renown in battle's stormy story,
Who won the crown in many an athlete-game.

(*Ant.* 2)

Yea, yet is she pre-eminent, a nation
Of men heroic—but the time would fail
If I should now essay the consecration
To lyre-strings and to song's soft-rippling gale
Of all that tale,
Lest men's ears should be overfilled the while
And envy vex us. Let the task yet lying
Before me speed on wings of poesy flying,
Thy due, boy, youngest glory of thine isle.

(*Ep.* 2)

Thou in the wrestlers' strife with feet unfailing
Followest thy mother's brethren glory-hymned:
Theognotus at Olympia stood prevailing;
His, nor Kleitomachus' fame by thee is dimmed,
The mighty-limbed
At Isthmus victor. The Midylid Clan
Dost thou exalt, who gainest that fruition
Of glory of which the Prophet spake in vision
Before Thebes' gates, who saw in battle's van

(*Str.* 3)

Them of the Second Race, sons of the Seven,
Who to avenge their sires from Argos came—
Spake riddling, while that first fight yet was striven:
'The spirit of their sires' heroic fame
Brighter shall flame

Yet in the sons inborn. I see, I see
Alkmaion, with the iridescent-glancing
Dragon on his bright shield, foremost advancing
Through Kadmus' rifted gates victoriously.

(*Ant.* 3)

But he, who in this war must flee the foemen,
Hero Adrastus—in that day I see
He is with tidings of far happier omen
Compassed as with a wreath of victory.
Yet also he
In his own house affliction's cup shall drain ;
For, of the Danaan host shall he, he only
Gather a slain son's bones in anguish lonely,
Ere safe, with folk unscathed, he comes again

(*Ep.* 3)

By the Gods' doom to Abas' street-ways stately.'
So Amphiaraus spake. And also I
Cast on Alkmaion's tomb, rejoicing greatly,
My wreaths of song : the dews of poesy
Thereon shall lie.
Neighbour and warder of my wealth is he,
Who met me to earth's storied centre faring
With triumph-boding. Dead, he still is sharing
In his forefathers' gift of prophecy.

(*Str.* 4)

But thou, Far-smiter, of whose presence haunted
Is that world-welcoming fane in Pytho's glen,
Even there unto our champion hast thou granted
The greatest of all joys within the ken
Of mortal men.
In the home-isle, at Artemis' Feast and thine
The Fivefold Contest's prize by thee was given
To him, for which men passionately have striven.
O King, I pray thee, graciously incline

(*Ant.* 4)

Thine eyes on each new song, that still my singing
May with the Muses peal in harmony.
Beside our revel-band of sweetly ringing
Voices, doth Justice pace. Ye Gods, hear me!
Oh let there be
No jealousy of thee in heavenly eyes,
Xenarkes, nor of thine! If one attaineth
Glory the which with no long toil he gaineth
To many a fool he seemeth to be wise,

(*Ep.* 4)

Who think his own good counsel still begetteth
Triumph; yet not with man success is found:
God is the all-bestower; yea, he setteth
On high the low, abaseth the renowned
Even to the ground.
At Megara also didst thou win the prize;
In Marathon's valley-nook thy name was glorious,
Aristomenes, and thou didst stand victorious
In thine own land at Hera's contests thrice.

(*Str.* 5)

With purpose grim thou hurld'st thee, with fierce straining,
On four that met thee in the wrestling-ring,
Youths to whom was not given by Fate's ordaining
From Pythian Games thy glad mien home to bring
Which now I sing;
Nor, as each fared back to his mother's side,
Thrilled them with joy proud laughter softly pealing,
But from the sneers of foes through byways stealing
Heart-stung by their ill-hap in shame they hied.

(*Ant.* 5)

He that in youth-tide's bloom hath won so lately
Glory, is wont to be uplifted high
On wings of hope; his courage waxeth greatly
With lifting pinions: riches' witchery
Doth he defy.

Yet ah, it is but for one little hour
That mortal bliss grows, not curse-overtaken.
In one short hour, as by an earthquake shaken,
'Tis hurled to the dust by adverse Destiny's power.

(*Ep.* 5)

What are we ?—what not ?—things in one day ending !
Man is a dream through shadows dimly seen.
But when a glory shines from God descending
Then rests on men a sunbright splendour-sheen
And life serene.
Speed thou, Aegina, mother love-adored,
This city on her voyage of freedom onward !
May Zeus' and Aiakus' blessing lift her sunward,
Peleus, Achilles, valiant Telamon ward ! 100

Pythian IX.

For Telesikrates of Kyrene, on his victory in the race in full-armour, 474 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

Fain am I, by the favour of the Graces
Deep-girt, to chant aloud the victory won
By Telesikrates, Kyrene's son,
At Pytho in the brazen-harnessed races.
His fortune fair I sing, and chant the glory
That crowns the city of the flying car,
Kyrene !—Her Apollo, saith the story,
The bright-haired Son of Leto, caught afar
From Pelion's dells with echoing winds enfolden,
And bare her thence upon his chariot golden,
That huntress-maid, to where he made her queen
Of flocks and harvests in her wide demesne,
The third part of the great earth's boundless bosom,
A root of leafage fair and lovely blossom.

(*Ant.* 1)

Then welcomed Aphrodite silver-footed
Her Delian guest, and touched with fingers light
The car a God had fashioned starry-bright ;
And o'er their bridal couch, the rapture-fruited,
The loveliness of shamefastness down-shedding
In bonds of mutual love she linked the twain,
The Archer-god unto the daughter wedding
Of Hypseus wide-dominioned, who did reign
In that day o'er the haughty Lapith nation,
A hero-son of the third generation
Of Ocean's Lord. Him mid the mountain-dells
World-famed where mighty Pindus heavenward swells,
The child of Earth, Kreusa Fountain-maiden,
Bare to Peneius' bed with sweetness laden.

(*Ep.* 1)

His child Kyrene of the arms of snow
Had little love for pacings to and fro
Before the loom, nor for feast-revelry
With maiden-friends home-keeping young as she ;
But warring with bronze darts without surcease,
And with the hunter's knife, that princess slew
Fierce beasts of prey. Ay, wide-spread was the peace
And restful that her father's cattle knew.
But little wasted she upon her eyes
Of slumber, restfellow that sweetly lies
On tired ones, when Dawn's feet prepare to climb the skies.

(*Str.* 2)

Where gloomed the forest-solitudes around her
She grappled a fierce lion once in fight
Spearless. Then He of the far arrow-flight,
Apollo, God of the wide quiver, found her.
Straightway amazement-stricken did he cry on
Cheiron, whose rocky hall was hard thereby :
' Leave thou thine hallowed cave, O Philyra's scion ;
Gaze on the mighty strength with wondering eye

Of yonder woman, how with brow undaunted
She wages conflict grim ! Not terror-haunted
Her spirit is in peril's tempest-rush :
Her iron heart no weight of toil can crush !
What sire begat a child so lion-hearted ?
From what strong kindred is she exile-parted,

(*Ant.* 2)

That now in hidden folds she should be dwelling
Of hills dark-shadowed ? She puts to the test
Strength limitless ! Doth it beseem the Blest
To lay on her his glorious hands all-quelling
Even now, or rather to pluck this sweet flower
Of spousal rites upon a bridal bed ? '
Came on the Centaur inspiration's power,
And in the wisdom of his heart he said,
With eyes beneath his kindly brow soft-smiling :
Phoebus, the keys of Suasion heart-beguiling
That ope the portal of love's sanctities
Are from the light withheld. A shame it is
For Gods or men to leap to love's fruition
First in broad day, dishonouring Night's sweet mission.

(*Ep.* 2)

Now even thee, whose tongue hath never lied,
Nor can, thy softened mood hath turned aside
To utter feignèd speech. *Thou* askest, King,
The maiden's lineage !—thou to whom everything
Is known, all issues whereto all things tend,
All paths that lead thereto through all the world :
How many leaves earth up to light doth send
In spring, the number of the sand-grains hurled
Down seas and streams when waves wind-driven rise,
And what shall come to pass and whence—thine eyes
See clearly. Yet, if I must match me against the wise,

(*Str.* 3)

I will speak on. To this glade sombre-shady
Thou cam'st to espouse her ; yea, and thou shalt bear

Her overseas unto the garden fair
Of Zeus, where thou shalt make her royal lady
Of a new city. Thou shalt gather thither
An isle-folk round its plain-encircled hill.
And that land's queen, content to queen it with her,
Libya of broad meads, shall with gracious will
Welcome thy glorious bride in golden bower.
And there the lady Libya shall, for dower,
Give her a portion of the land to be
Lawful domain beneath her sovereignty,
Land rich in tribute of all plants fruit-laden
And wildwood-prowlers for thine huntress-maiden.

(*Ant.* 3)

There shall she bear the son whom thou hast given,
Whom glorious Hermes in his hour of birth
Shall from his mother take, and bear to Earth
And to the Hours, the splendour-throned in Heaven.
And while upon their knees thy child is lying
Soft-cradled, these between his lips shall pour
Ambrosia and nectar ; so undying,
Even as a God, shall he be evermore,
As Zeus, as holy Apollo : sweetest, dearest
To all his friends, to their hearts ever nearest.
Nomeus, ' flock-warder,' Agreus, these shall name
Thy son, as Aristaius those acclaim.'
His words spurred on the God's heart passion-thrilling
To bring to pass the bridal's sweet fulfilling.

(*Ep.* 3)

Swift are the acts of Gods, and short their ways
Whose purposes to their fulfilment race.
That selfsame day saw Love his goal attain ;
For in a golden chamber were the twain
Made one, in Libya's bower, whence she looks down
On a fair city famed in athlete-rings.
Karneades' son hath linked Kyrene's town
At Pytho with the fair flower fortune brings.

His victory there hath published wide her name.
The city of fair girls with glad acclaim
Greets him who brings to her from Delphi lovely fame.

(*Str.* 4)

Great deeds of prowess lure the bard unwitting
To lengthen out his strain ; yet brevity
Grace-clad the wise hear most acceptably.
In everything to grasp the season fitting
Crowneth the emprise. Thebe seven-gated
Knew it ; nor Iolaus failed to tread
That path. He clave Eurystheus' head all-hated
With the keen sword ; but when himself lay dead,
Then Thebe buried him with honour, heaping
His grave-mound where Amphitryon lay sleeping,
Her chariot-chief—that tomb wherein did rest
His father's father, he who was the guest
Of the Sown Men, lords of white steeds, who greeted
That hero well in Thebe stately-streeted.

(*Ant.* 4)

To him and Zeus did royal-souled Alkmena
In love united, in one travail bear
The might of twin sons : conquerors they were
Ever, these twain, in battle's grim arena.
A dullard is the man who never raiseth
His voice to sing the deeds of Herakles,
And Dirke's streams remembereth not nor praiseth
Whose Fountain-maid reared him and Iphikles.
Unto these now will I uplift a chanting
Of triumph-song for that their gracious granting
Of vows' fulfilment. On me may your light,
O Graces ringing-voiced, shine ever bright !
Aegina and Nisus' Hill have heard me singing
Three times ere this, Kyrene's praise outringing.

(*Ep.* 4)

And so the impotence that is the shame
Of tongue-tied bards do I escape. I claim

That citizens, friends or foes, shall ne'er conceal
Good work accomplished for the common weal,
That jealousy set not at nought the rede
Of that old Sea-god : ' Give whole-hearted praise,
If justice claim it, for each noble deed,
Even to a foe—dispraise is thy disgrace ! '
Our maids at Pallas' yearly feasts saw thee
Full oft victorious, and prayed silently,
Telesikrates, that such their spouse or son might be.

(*Str.* 5)

In Games Olympian thine was fame far-ringing.
And in the lists beside Earth's central stone,
And in the land thou claimest for thine own :—
But lo, as I would quench my thirst for singing,
I hear a voice that speaks of old-time glory
That bids me pay a debt, recall the pride
Of thy forefathers, bids me tell the story
How, for the winning of a Libyan bride,
Hasted to Irasa's city many a lover
Of a fair-haired one famed the wide world over,
Drawn thither for Antaius' daughter's sake,
Whom many a gallant kinsman fain would take
To wife, and many in far countries dwelling ;
For wondrous was her beauty, past all telling.

(*Ant.* 5)

With passionate longing for love's fruit they sought her,
This mortal Hebe of the Golden Crown.
Howbeit a marriage of more high renown
Her father purposed for his princess-daughter.
For he had heard how Danaus meditated
At Argos how should spousal-rites be won
For eight-and-forty daughters yet unmated,
Ere their life's noontide should have come and gone,
And how he compassed this with no delaying.
For at the limits of the lists arraying

The throng of suitors of the maidens sweet,
He bade them by contention of swift feet
Decide which several daughter should be given
To each whose feet had for the guerdon striven.

(*Ep.* 5)

So would that lord of Libya-land decide
Between those suitors for a princess-bride.
He set the maid bedecked with gold and gem
To be the goal and prize, and cried to them
That he should lead her home who foremost sped
And touched her robes. Of all that suitor-band
Alexidamus' swift feet foremost fled,
And his hand clasped the noble maiden's hand,
And led her through the Nomad horse-array.
Leaves many and wreaths upon him showered they,
Ay, many a victory-plume had he won ere that day.

Pythian X.

For Hippokleas of Thessaly, on his victory in the quarter-mile race for boys. 498 B.C. The expenses of the composition and performance of this ode (since the winner's family were not in a position to meet them) were, for the honour of his country, borne by Thorax, head of the Aleuadae Clan, the aristocratic rulers of Larissa. These claimed descent from Perseus, through Herakles.

(*Str.* 1)

Happy is Sparta, and blessèd is Thessaly, seeing there reigneth
In one and the other a race descended from Herakles.
Is not the vaunt out of season ? O nay, for a summons constraineth
Me from Pelinna and Pytho and sons of Aleuas, for these
Would bring to Hippokleas chanting of victory-choruses.

(*Ant.* 1)

He hath tasted the joy of the athlete : the gorge of Parnassus hath hailed him
To the host of the dwellers around as first in the boys' double-race.

Sweet, O Apollo, man's work is when God's strong help hath availed him,
Sweet in beginning and end ; and this he achieved by thy grace ;
And his prowess inborn in the print of the feet of his father doth pace.
(*Ep.* 1)

For twice in Olympia's contests in armour of battle-biding
Ares did Phrikias run : in the mead under Kirrha's rock hiding
Were the feet of the father winged with the might of victory.
So ever may fortune fair follow these in the days to be !
So may their splendour of wealth ever bloom as the flower-starred lea.
(*Str.* 2)

Of the blessings delightsome of Hellas may these win no small measure !
No jealous repentings of Gods turn ever to darkness their light !
Sooth, a God's heart only is painless ; yet he winneth happiness' treasure,
And is hymned of the singers, whose prowess of hands or of feet to the height
Of athlete-triumph hath climbed by his courage and bodily might,
(*Ant.* 2)

And he who hath lived to behold a son by Fate's favour attaining
The Pythian crown. Heaven's towers are for mortals unscaleable
Yet all havens of splendour a mortal may sail to are his for the gaining.[aye;
But neither the journeying foot nor the galley, quest as they may,
To the Rest-land Auroral shall find the mystery-hidden way.
(*Ep.* 2)

Yet did Perseus the war-chief feast in their halls, and their sacrificing
Behold, as from altars he saw the smoke of ass-hecatombs rising
Unto Apollo ; yea, and the God hath delight evermore
In the festival-banquets of these, and their chants that heavenward soar ;
And he laugheth beholding the beasts as they wanton with ramp and roar.
(*Str.* 3)

Yea, and the Muse from their lives is not exiled, but circlewise winding
Dances of maidens sweep, and the voice of the lyre rings clear,
And the notes of the pipe, and their tresses with golden bay-leaves binding
Blithely they banquet, nor eld nor wasting disease draw near
To that hallowed folk, but from toil and from clash of sword and spear

(*Ant.* 3)

Dwell they afar, and the tyrannous Goddess of Retribution
They escape. To that happy folk of old fared Danae's son
Guided on by Athene, and breathing an aweless heart's resolution.
And the Gorgon he slew, and he bare that head which luridly shone
With serpents that dealt to the island people a death of stone.

(*Ep.* 3)

So the Gods but accomplish it, nought is too hard for our credence and wonder.
Now stay the car, Muse; from the prow slip the anchor to grapple there-under
The sea-floor, to guard thee against the reef that lurking lies.
For the flower-sweet glory of this my song ever restlessly flies
From legend to legend, a bee with honey-laden thighs.

(*Str.* 4)

O, I trust that, the while the lips of Ephyra's singers are pouring
My sweet strains forth by the side of Peneius, my songs may make
Hippokleas by age-mates and elders more honoured, with eyes adoring
Looked on by maidens young, for his victory-garlands' sake.
Men's hearts do diverse temptations with longing captive take;

(*Ant.* 4)

But the prize for which each man hath striven, and won, is the soul-alluring
Desire of his heart for the hour that is present—yet what the tide
Of time in a year shall bring, none knoweth. Ah, but enduring
Shall be Thorax' friendship, I trust! On this car of the Muses I ride
By the help he hath rendered, a friend to a friend, and a guide to a guide.

(*Ep.* 4)

As gold by the touchstone tried is the soul that from right never falters.
His noble brethren withal will we praise, the princely exalters
Of Thessaly's commonweal, which ever they magnify.
Yea, best in the hands of high-born men doth the piloting lie
Of cities wherein their fathers have ruled in the years gone by.

Pythian XI.

For Thrasydaius of Thebes, on his victory in the Boys' foot-race, 474 B.C. Sung at Thebes in a procession to the temple of Apollo.

(*Str.* 1)

Daughters of Kadmus!—Semele borne mid flame
To Olympus' streets—White Goddess whose earth-name
Was Ino, who dost share the hyaline caves
Of Nereus' daughters, maidens of the waves;
Come with the mother of that mighty son
Herakles: pace to Melia's temple on.
Come to the treasure-house of tripods golden
Which Loxias hath in chiefest honour holden,

(*Ant.* 1)

And named the Shrine Ismenian, the home
Of truthful oracles. Ye children come
Born of Harmonia! Lo, he doth command
The host of goddess-heroines of the land
To gather to his temple, that at fall
Of eventide ye may with one voice all
Of holy Themis sing, of Pytho's visions,
And of Earth's Heart that giveth just decisions. 10

(*Ep.* 1)

Of seven-gated Thebes the glory sing,
And of the strife in Kirrha's athlete-ring
Wherein hath Thrasydaius made renowned
His sire's hearth, for the third time garland-crowned
In those rich fields where Pylades the loyal
Welcomed the heir to Sparta's sceptre royal,

(*Str.* 2)

Orestes: him his nurse Arsinoe
Rescued from the fierce hands, the treachery
Most foul of Klytaemnestra, when she laid
The young child's father dead with murderous blade,

And when with the pale-gleaming bronze she sped
To Acheron's shadowy margent of the dead
Kassandra, Dardanid Priam's prophet-daughter
With Agamemnon's soul, in one red slaughter

(*Ant.* 2)

Wrought by a ruthless woman. Was she stung
By heavy-handed wrath, to life that sprung
When on the altar Iphigeneia lay
Beside Euripus' sea-gorge, far away
From her own land? Or was she adultery's thrall
Passion-seduced to sin beneath night's pall?—
For brides new-wedded hatefullest transgression,
Not to be hidden, made the world's possession

(*Ep.* 2)

By scandal-gloating neighbours' tongues: for spite
Of jealousy clings cloudlike to the height
Of royal station. Of the common herd
The sins and follies pass unmarked, unheard.
So, after ten long years returned, to die on
His own hearth-stone in Amyklae, Atreus' scion,

(*Str.* 3)

And drew to death with him the prophetess-maid,
When he, avenging Helen's rape, had laid
Low all Troy's homes delectable in flame.
But that child-head, his son Orestes, came
Safe to old Strophius, his father's guest,
Who in the vale dwelt 'neath Parnassus' crest.
And the years watched that murderess, till they brought her
A son to join with hers her paramour's slaughter.

(*Ant.* 3)

Surely, O friends, where brancheth into twain
One track, in wilderment have I in vain
Sought the straight path I travelled hitherto!
Was it some wind that from the right course blew
Me, as a boat drifts chartless o'er the sea?
Nay, Muse, 'tis thine, if thou for silver fee

Didst covenant to uplift thy voice in singing,
To send it this way now, now that way ringing,

(*Ep.* 3)

Now to the father's wreath at Pytho won,
To Thrasydaius now, his victor son.
Gladness and glory ever shine on these :
Erewhile they won proud chariot-victories
When down Olympus' world-famed course went dashing
Their horses' splendour of swiftness sunlike-flashing.

(*Str.* 4)

Last, mid disvestured runners forth they came
In Pytho's athlete-lists, and put to shame
A host of Hellene rivals by their speed.
God grant that I may crave such prowess-meed
As fits with honour, while life's tree is green
May seek things possible. Still have I seen,
In all states, happiest is the middle station,
But despotism hath my condemnation.

(*Ant.* 4)

The general good I seek with my whole might.
So baffled is infatuate envy's spite,
When he who hath climbed high holds his spirit's reins,
And the brute pride of arrogance restrains.
So, when his feet draw nigh the last long home,
More bright and fair to him shall dark death come,
Who to his nearest and his dearest leaveth
A good name—costlier treasure none receiveth.

(*Ep.* 4)

'Tis this hath raised above the common throng
Iolaus Iphikles' son renowned in song ;
So Kastor's might lives on in poesy's strain,
And thine, King Polydeukes, god-born twain,
Who in the tomb lie through one day of sorrow,
On whom Heaven's glory shineth on each morrow.

Pythian XII.

For Midas of Akragas, on his victory in flute-playing, 490 B.C.

(*Str.* 1)

Lover of splendour, above all cities beauty-dowered,
Persephone's home, who dost dwell by Akragas' water-meads green
Sheep-pastured, throned on thine hill of the ramparts stately-towered,
With kindly favour of Gods and of men accept, O Queen,
This crown that from Pytho is brought thee: the glory of Midas hailing
Welcome him, him who is champion of Hellas in that flute-strain
Which Pallas Athene devised when she wove into music the wailing
Of the Gorgons fierce, their death-dirge over a sister slain,

(*Str.* 2)

The lament that she heard from the awful maids' snake-heads outshrieking,
As it poured from their lips forth laden with bitterest anguish of grief,
When Perseus had smitten the third, their sister, with bronze death-wreaking,
And bare thence doom to Seriphus' island-folk and their chief.
Yea, and the wondrous daughters of Phorkys he spoiled of vision,
And bitter for Polydektes his bridal-gift he made,
Bitter his mother's thraldom, her spousals' enforced decision,
With the head of Medusa the weirdly beautiful, shorn by the blade

(*Str.* 3)

Of Danae's son, of the shower of gold, as the legend telleth,
Begotten. But when the Maid had released from his labours' strain
The man she befriended, she framed the manifold music that welleth
From the flute, that her harmonies so might mimic the shrieks of pain
Wild and high from Euryale's ravening jaws outshrilling. [20
Her devising it was, but she gave it to mortal men to possess;
And the 'Strain of the Many Heads' she named it, the spirit-thrilling
Kindler of hearts to the contests whereinto multitudes press,

(*Str.* 4)

Notes poured thick and fast through the thin-beaten bronze and the reeds upspringing
By the burg of the Graces, the city of fair dance-lawns in the close

Of the Nymph of Kephisus, true witnesses they of the dance soft-swinging.
If bliss among mortals there be, 'tis not won but with travail-throes.
Yet a God may accomplish it even to-day—but there is no fleeing
That which of Fate is foredoomed : but surely a time shall be
When a Power that smites with a stroke all-sudden, past man's foreseeing,
Shall grant thee a boon unhoped for, yet hold back another from thee.

THE NEMEAN ODES.

Nemean I.

For Chromius of Etna, who claimed descent from Herakles, on his victory in the chariot-race, B.C. 476 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

O BREATHING-PLACE of Alpheus panting in chase of the Nymph Arethusa,
O child
Of Syracuse world-renowned, Ortygia, couch of the Huntress-queen of the wild,
O sister of Delos, the chant sweet-ringing is speeding from thee to proclaim with singing
The mighty glory of tempest-footed horses, by Zeus' grace, Etna's lord ;
For the chariot of Chromius and Nemea stir me to yoke to her victory song's reward.

(*Ant.* 1)

Lo, how the Song's foundations are laid in homage of Gods, and in praise of the might
Of the victor's godlike prowess ! By fortune fair is he lifted to glory's height.
Even the Song-queens joy in recording contests strenuous, garland-awarding.
Ho, scatter achievement's splendour-seed o'er the isle Lord Zeus to Persephone gave
To be Queen of the land fruit-wealthy, and bowed the locks that o'er brows Olympian wave

(*Ep.* 1)

For his pledge to exalt her crowns of wealthy cities, this Sicily harvest-teeming ;
And a people Kronion bestowed on her, wooers of war in bronze-hammered harness gleaming,
A folk of the spear and the steed, to be wedded full oft to Olympia's olive-leaf golden :—
Lo, I have lighted on theme after theme, never falsely, but aye by the truth have I holden.

(*Str.* 2)

Sweet are the strains that I sing as I stand at the doors of a hero who loveth the guest ;
And there is arrayed a banquet meet for a bard in the halls whither oft have pressed
Strangers from far-off shores who departed :—O yea, he hath won for him friends true-hearted
By whom slander is quenched, as smouldering fire by water. Diverse be men in skill,
But in straight paths ever 'tis meet to walk, and to fight life's battle as Nature shall will.

(*Ant.* 2)

Bodily strength in action worketh, but wisdom of soul in counsel, for one
In whom is inborn the skill to foresee the future. Agesidamus' son,
To thee, life through, by the grace of Heaven, have strength and wisdom alike been given.
I love not to hoard in mine halls vast wealth, but to taste life's pleasures and share life's wine,
For my good name's sake, with friends ; for the hopes of toil-tried men I account as mine.

(*Ep.* 2)

For me, my spirit is willing thrall to the fascination of Herakles' glory ;
Mid the heights of achievement whereunto he soared I love to recall that old-time story,

How, soon as the son of Zeus came forth to the light of day with his twin-born brother,
When he leapt to the splendour of sunlight-glow from the travail-tormented womb of his mother,

(*Str.* 3)

Then Hera the gold-enthroned marked well where the babe mid his saffron swaddlings lay ;
And the Queen of the Gods, with anger stung, two serpents against him sent straightway.
Into the chamber, when opened its portal, they slid, those servants of hate immortal,
Ravening-eager to coil their swiftly-darting jaws round the children twain.
But Herakles straightway uplifted his head, and was first to essay the battle-strain,

(*Ant.* 3)

And of either serpent he gripped the throat in the hands wherefrom escape there was none,
Till the breath of life from their monstrous frames was breathed as the feet of time stole on.
But the arrow of horror soul-overpowering smote the maids round the bed of Alkmena cowering.
Yea, even she from her couch of the night had leapt of her tunic disarrayed,
And with weak woman-hands to beat the monsters' tyrannous onslaught back she essayed.

(*Ep.* 3)

And swiftly a throng of the chiefs Kadmeian came hurrying thither in bronze-mail clashing,
And thither the father Amphitryon hasted, his falchion bared from the sheath outflashing,
Smitten with keen-stabbing anguish : for each man's grief on his own soul heavily presseth ;
But soon disburdened of grief is the heart that nought but another's affliction distresseth.

(*Str.* 4)

And there with his soul in a turmoil of wonder and rapture past all bearing he stood
Beholding the tokens of giant strength and the child's unearthly-aweless mood:
For to falsehood the tale of the messengers' telling by the Gods had been turned. Then one near-dwelling
He summoned, Teiresias ever-unerring seer, the prophet of Zeus most high;
And to him and to all his host the child's life-fortune did that seer prophesy.

(*Ant.* 4)

For he told how many justice-defying monsters on land and sea he should slay,
And should give unto death a man most hateful who walked in malice's crooked way;
Yea also and when the strife should be striven on Phlegra's plain of the Dwellers in Heaven
Against the earth-spawned Giants arrayed, then 'neath his arrows' rushing rain
Should the flame-bright hair of the monster-brood be fouled in death with dust of the plain.

(*Ep.* 4)

But himself, at rest from his mighty toils, should thereafter inherit through days unending
Peace ever-during, for sufferings past a recompense all earth-joys transcending,
In the mansions of bliss wherein, united to Hebe blooming in youth eternal,
With Zeus Kronion he sits at the feast in the deep content of a home supernal.

Nemean II.

For Timodemus of Acharnae in Attica, who had been trained in Salamis, on his victory in the Pancration, B.C. 485 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

As the sons of Homer, the singers of deftly-woven lays,
Ever begin their chants with a prelude in Zeus's praise,
So in the Grove whose glory is chanted in every nation
This hero-athlete hath laid his achievements' first foundation
Where in Nemean Zeus's name are bestowed the victor's bays.

(*Str.* 2)

And if She, who unswerving hath guided his feet, even Destiny,
On the path by his forefathers trodden, hath given this man to be
A glory to mighty Athens, he surely is fated victorious,
This son of Timonous, often to pluck the flower most glorious
Of the Isthmian Games, and at Pytho to win the victory ; 10

(*Str.* 3)

For 'tis meet that Orion's rising should follow exceeding nigh
To the Pleiad Maids of the Mountain. Few can with Salamis vie
As a nurse of warriors mighty : yea, Hector in Troy's war-leaguer
Heard Aias' challenge ; and thee shall thy prowess contest-eager
In the fivefold grapple, O Timodemus, glorify.

(*Str.* 4)

Acharnae, as tell old legends, for hero-sons is renowned ;
And in all that pertaineth to contests pre-eminent still hath been found
This Timodemus' House : in Parnassus imperial-seated
Have they won four victory-wreaths, strong champions aye undefeated.
Yea, also in royal Pelops' mountain-folds were they crowned 20

(*Str.* 5)

Eight times by the sons of Corinth ; in Nemea withal did they gain
Seven triumph-wreaths ; and at home, where Olympian Zeus's fane
Looks down on the contest, garlands whose number passeth the telling.
Let Timodemus, O citizens, hear your acclaim upswelling
Hailing his home-return ! Now upraise ye the sweet-ringing strain.

Nemean III.

For Aristokleides of Aegina, on his victory in the Pancration, B.C. 475 (?), some years before; written for an anniversary of the victory.

(*Str.* 1)

O QUEENLY Muse, our mother, hitherward come, I pray,
When the holy Moon brings round the Nemean festal day,
To Aegina the guest-thronged Dorian isle. Where the ripples are sliding
Of Asopian waves, young craftsmen of songs honey-savoured, abiding
Thy coming, are longing to hear thy voice's great song-burden!
Sooth, diverse deeds ever thirst for many a diverse guerdon,
But victory in these Games above all things loveth Song
Meetest companion of crowns and of triumphs achieved by the strong.

(*Ant.* 1)

O Muse, unto me full measure of inspiration accord,
And do thou, his daughter, upraise to the cloud-thronged heaven's Lord
A noble hymn: I will blend it—its strains as in spousals allying
With the lyre and the voices of singers. Aegina's glorifying
Shall be a delightsome task; for there did the Myrmidons olden
Dwell: on the place where in ancient days were their gatherings holden
By thy favour no shameful reproach did Aristokleides bring
By weakness in that great strife of the strong in the athlete-ring

(*Ep.* 1)

Of the fivefold grapple, but there in Nemea's low-lying plain
Won victory's healing balm for the blows' overtasking pain.
But if Aristophanes' son, in whom is the beauty blended
Of glorious goodlihead and glorious deeds, hath ascended
To the heights of heroic achievement, impossible is it that he
Past Herakles' Pillars should voyage on o'er a trackless sea,

(*Str.* 2)

Pillars the Hero-god set for a world-famed witness to men
Of their voyaging's limits. Monstrous beasts had he quelled ere then

In the seas, and had tracked to the end the fen-floods sluggishly flowing
Till he came to the uttermost bourne that constrained his homeward going, [bearing
And he meted the bounds of earth :—but to what far foreland art
On an alien shore, my soul, thy bark over dim seas faring ?
Nay, I bid thee for Aiakus summon the Muse, and for Aiakus' race ;
For the flower of justice adorneth the precept, ' *The good shalt thou praise.*'
(*Ant.* 2)
To cherish hot longings for far-away themes is nowise best :
Search rather at home. A fitting theme is the fruit of thy quest
For sweet song's gracing. When deeds of the heroes of old thou art telling,
Sing the joy of king Peleus in hewing a lance all lances excelling,
How alone with no war-host he compassed Iolkos' storming and spoiling,
And made captive and bride the Sea-goddess Thetis by strenuous toiling.
Sing of the world-famed might of Telamon, how with aid
Of Iolaus his war-fellow low was Laomedon laid,
(*Ep.* 2)
And the Amazon Maids of the brazen bows did he face in the fray
With him ; nor the edge of his spirit was ever dulled by dismay
The queller of men. It is inborn valour with peril that copeth ;
He whose valour of others is learnt is a man that in darkness gropeth.
His will is a wind ever-veering ; his feet are unstable aye ;
Ineffectual his purpose is still, though achievements untold he essay.
(*Str.* 3)
But Achilles the golden-haired, while in Philyra's home yet he stayed,
Child though he were, made mighty deeds but his sport : he swayed
The short-headed dart in his hands, and, swift as the wild wind's pinions,
Death to the lions he dealt whom he tracked through their forest-dominions.
Boars also he slew, and the pulsing bodies of boar and lion
Still would he hale to the cave of the Centaur, Zeus's scion,
At the first when but six years old, but thereafter through all those days,
So that Artemis, yea, and Athene the dauntless beheld with amaze.
(*Ant.* 3)
As he slew the deer, unholpen of hounds or the net's hidden guile ;
For by fleetness of foot he outran them. This tale told long erewhile

I recall, how that Jason was reared in the cave of the rock-rib rafter
By deep-thoughted Cheiron, who nurtured Asklepius thereafter,
And taught how by herbs and the pain-soothing hand is disease resisted,
And who won for Peleus the Daughter of Nereus, the ivory-wristed,
And fostered for her that goodliest man of men, their son,
And trained up his soul unto greatness by chivalry alone,

(*Ep.* 3)

That, borne on the swift-rushing wings of the winds o'er the sea's highway
Unto Troy, he might bide the Lycian and Phrygian and Dardan array
As their battle-cry rang through the clashing of lances, and close undaunted
With the Aethiop spearmen, and set the resolve in his heart firm-planted
That Helenus' fiery-hearted kinsman from battle-strain
Should return not, nor Memnon their chieftain behold his home again.

(*Str.* 4)

Thence flashed it, the splendour of Aiakus' house, which abideth for aye,
O Zeus! They are thy blood: thine is the contest whereon my lay
Like an arrow hath lit; in its strains young voices the glory are singing
Of the land: for victorious Aristokleides 'tis meetly outringing,
Who hath added another wreath of renown unto this isle's story, [glory.
And hath brightened the Pythian Shrine of the Envoys with visions of
For the issue of all endeavours is seen in the hour of the test,
Whereby alone is it proved what champion is best of the best,

(*Ant.* 4)

Be he a boy among boys, or a man among men, or again
An elder mid elders, as places in life's race-course appertain
Unto humankind—yea, four be the excellences attending
Each life, and to each as it comes all heed should a man be lending.
Thou art lacking in none. Farewell, friend! Lo, unto thee am I speeding
The Muses' honey; and blended therewith is milk white-beading
With fairy bubbles the foam of whose mingling mantles around
A chalice of song ushered in by Aeolian flutes' sweet sound,

(*Ep.* 4)

Late though it come. Most swift is the eagle of all winged things,
Who suddenly grips in his talons with far-flying swoop of his wings

His blood-stained quarry. But chattering daws o'er the low grounds hover.
On thee, whom the favour of Klio the splendour-throned doth cover
With glory, because of thy spirit, the athlete-champion's mind,
From Nemea and Megara light, and from Epidaurus, hath shined.

Nemean IV.

For Timasarchus of Aegina, a member of the Theandrid House, on his victory in the Boys' wrestling-match, B.C. 473 (?). The praises of his uncle Kallikles, and of his trainer, Melesias the Athenian, are also sung.

(*Str.* 1)

When conflict's bitter strain to its decision
At last attaineth, then the best physician
Is mirth, to close the overtasking day.
And song, the Muses' child inspired, can lay
On the heart's wounds her magic hands of healing.
Not steaming baths so softly charm away
The ache of toil, as words of praise outpealing
In unison with the lyre. Man's speech shall long
Outlast his deeds, what words soe'er the tongue
Hath drawn up, by the Graces' kind control,
From wells of inspiration in the soul.

(*Str.* 2)

Now be it mine to make such song-oblation,
To Zeus Kronion tendering dedication
Thereof, and Nemea. This my prelude be
To Timasarchus' wrestling. Be it of thee
Welcomed, O Aiakids' stronghold goodly-towered,
Beacon of justice, aliens' sanctuary!
O were thy sire Timokritus yet dowered
With life's heat by the sun all-quickening,
Oft bending o'er the changeful cithern-string
Would he have waked his music for his son,
And hymned the glorious triumph he hath won,

(*Str.* 3)

Who from Kleonae brought a perfume-streaming
Festoon of wreaths, and one from marble-gleaming
Renownèd Athens ; and again beside
Amphitryon's sepulchre fame-glorified
Old Kadmus' sons in Thebe seven-gated
Rained on him flowers with welcome kindly-eyed
In whose love is Aegina consecrated ;
For thither as a friend to friends he hied,
As doth a ship into a haven glide,
Came to that burg which welcomes aye the guest,
Came to the Hall of Herakles heaven-blest,

(*Str.* 4)

With whom went stalwart Telamon for the smiting
Of Troy, and met the Meropes grim-fighting,
And Alkyoneus the giant did they slay,
A warrior terrible in battle-play ;
Yet slew him not till rocks like slingstones whirling
From his hands crushed in shattered disarray
Twelve cars, and hero-riders deathward hurling
Twice twelve he strewed amid that wreck of cars.
Wholly unversed is he in lore of wars
To whose ears never that old saying came,
' Who doeth violence must endure the same.'

(*Str.* 5)

But not for me is legend's full unfolding,
Who see the law of song mine hand withholding :
Yea, and the hasting hours brook no delay.
A strong spell draws me on to sing the day
Of the New Moon that on those Games was shining.
Though round thee breast-high plash the deep-sea spray,
Stand firm ! Strive on 'gainst treacherous foes' designing !
O'er foes triumphant shall we win the port
In clear day ! One of less heroic sort,
With envy evil-eyed, in darkness schemes ;
But fruitless to the ground shall fall his dreams.

(*Str.* 6)

But one thing certainly mine heart divineth,
That, whatso excellence Lord Fate designeth
For me, Time's onward-stealing feet will bring
To its ordained perfection that same thing.
Weave on, O winsome Lyre, make speed in weaving
Thy web of song that shall accordant ring
With Lydian harmony, song-vesture cleaving
Lovingly round Oenone and Cyprus, where,
Far from the ancient home constrained to fare,
An island-king Telamonian Teucer is,
While Aias rules ancestral Salamis ;

(*Str.* 7)

And in the Euxine Sea a sunbright island
Achilles rules ; and in the Phthian highland
Still Thetis queens it ; in the pastures green
Of broad Epirus, where long forelands lean
From oakwoods of Dodona downward trending
To the Ionian sea-gulf's rippling sheen,
Neoptolemus rules a people cattle-tending.
But the land under Pelion capt with cloud,
Iolkos, was of old to thraldom bowed
When Peleus turned thereon a warring hand,
And to Haimonians gave the traitor's land ;

(*Str.* 8)

Because Akastus, son of Pelias, hearkened
Unto Hippolyte's counsels treachery-darkened,
From Peleus stole the sword that Daedalus wrought,
And by the ambush of the man-brutes sought
To murder him : howbeit righteous Cheiron
Rescued him, and that destiny he brought
To pass which Fate had framed with hand of iron.
So Peleus quenched the violence of fire,
And quelled the keen claws and the furious ire
Of lions dauntless-hearted, and the grim
Edge of the terrible teeth that threatened him,

(*Str.* 9)

And won to wife the Child of Nereus hoary,
Thetis the bright-throned, saw the enringing glory
Of seats whereon the Lords of sky and sea
Were throned, their bridal gifts of sovranty
To him and his seed after him revealing,
Even the mighty kingdoms that should be.
But past Gadeira and the gloom concealing
The outsea none press. Turn the sail again
Of the ship backward unto Europe's main.
The whole tale of the sons of Aiakus' line
To tell throughout transcends all powers of mine.

(*Str.* 10)

I with the Clan Theandrid covenanted
To be their herald: lo, my lips have chanted
Their prowess! Of those contests is my song
Which make the thews of champions passing strong.
Olympia, Isthmus, Nemea,—wheresoever
They prove their might amid the athlete-throng,
Without renown for fruit they turn back never
Home, Timasarchus, where thy clan, 'tis told,
In victory-crowns pre-eminence doth hold.
If thou wouldst bid me rear, besides all these,
Unto thy mother's brother Kallikles

(*Str.* 11)

A pillar more than Parian marble splendid—
As gold when the refiner's work is ended
Shows all its brightness forth, so by the lay
That chants great deeds in war or athlete-play
A man is raised to heights of bliss excelling
The pomp of kings—let him then, though to-day
On Acheron's shore thy Kallikles be dwelling,
Yet catch the sound of this my voice that sings
On earth his praise who in the athlete-rings
Of the great Trident-wielder thunder-voiced
With brows at Corinth garland-crowned rejoiced.

(*Str.* 12)

His praise did Euphanes thy grandsire hoary
Sing, fain to tell, my son, his prowess' story.
Hymned by the old bards men of old have been ;
But, whatsoe'er each singer's self hath seen,
That trusteth he that best of all he singeth.
So he that chants Melesias' praise, I ween,
Would be as one who every rival flingeth
To earth, with words like wrestlers' limbs that twine ;
In grapple of speech yields never his mighty line—
A courteous conqueror of a noble foe,
He deals the churl relentless overthrow.

Nemean V.

For Pytheas, son of Lampon, of Aegina, (trained by Menander of Athens), on his victory in the Boys' Pancration, B.C. 485 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

No carver of statues am I, to fashion images moveless abiding
Dumb on the pedestals where men set them ! Nay, sweet song of mine,
Forth do thou fare from Aegina's haven, on every tall ship riding,
And on every pinnace, bearing the tidings over the far sea-line
How Pytheas, son of Lampon the stalwart-thewed, hath won the crown
Of victory at the Nemean Games, the All-overcomer's renown,
Ere his cheeks were flushed with the summer bloom of the soft vine-cluster's down.

(*Ant.* 1)

So to the Aiakids, hero-spearmen from Kronos and Zeus descended
And from the golden Nereid Sea-maids, honour hath Pytheas brought,
And to the mother-city which alway the stranger-guest hath befriended.
That peopled with heroes and famed for ships she might be, this was besought
By Endaïs' scions the far-renowned and by princely Phokus' might

Who of Psamatheia the Goddess was born on the sea-beach foam-flecked white.
By the altar they stood of Zeus the Hellenian Sire, and to heaven's height
(*Ep.* 1)
These all together uplifted their hands, and for that boon made supplication.
I shrink with shame from telling the awful deed unrighteously dared,
And the doom from Oenone that drave them forth to be men without a nation,
And how from the far-famed island-home those mighty heroes fared.
I refrain : not every perfect truth its face should prudently show,
And how to be silent is oft the wisest thing that a man may know.
(*Str.* 2)
But and if the praise of riches or might of hands or of battleward-sweeping
Steel-clad war-hosts kindle the heart of the bard, let them delve me the ground
For a long leap hence—O yea, for my knees are strung for lightsome leaping.
Ay, an eagle am I, and the eagle's swoop is beyond the sea-line's bound.
Yea, for those heroes the welcoming song upon Pelion's height was sung
By the choir most lovely of Muses nine ; and the lyre with seven chords strung
With the golden quill in Apollo's hand was swept till melodies rung
(*Ant.* 2)
Of strains ever changing in manifold wise. The praises of Zeus they chanted ;
Then sang they of Thetis and Peleus, and how Hippolyte, wanton child
Of Kretheus, fain would have trapped his feet in the treachery-net that she planted ;
And her husband, the lord of the Magnete folk, by a tale of lies she beguiled,
And by counsel of subtlety wrought upon him to share in her own dark plot ;
For a slanderous tale of her heart's devising, a web of deceit she wrought,
How that Peleus had shamed her, Akastus' queen, and his bed's defilement sought.

(*Ep.* 2)

But contrary thereunto was the truth, for with passionate heart she besought him
Oft with beguiling words; but her bold speech stirred him to wrath: straightway
He refused her embraces; with awe of the anger of Guest-ward Zeus he bethought him.
And Allfather, the King of Immortals, who marshals the host of the cloud-array,
Was ware thereof, and pledged by his nod that his bride ere long should be
Of the Maids of the Golden Distaff a child of the Ancient of the Sea.

(*Str.* 3)

For Poseidon their kinsman's consent would he win, who from Aigae on shores Euboean
Oft rideth the ridges of sea to the world-famed Dorian Isthmus, where
Glad chorus-companies welcome the God with the reed-flutes' ringing paean,
And men contend in the lists with the fearless strength of lithe limbs there.
'Tis the Fate which is linked with the hour of our birth that controlleth our whole life long
Our actions. Thou from Aegina twice, Euthymenes[1] the strong,
Hast leapt to the arms of Victory, and hast won the guerdon of song.

(*Ant.* 3)

O Pytheas, still doth thy mother's brother honour his kin who follow
In the steps of one of the selfsame blood. Upon thee did Nemea smile,
And the Delphian festal month of Aegina, ever-beloved of Apollo.
Triumphant wast thou o'er thine age-mates all, alike in thy native isle,
And by Nisus' hill of the pleasant glades. I rejoice that for glory's crown
In the lists of honour contendeth still Aegina's every town.
But forget not thy debt to Menander, through whom were thy toils repaid with renown.

1. Uncle of Pytheas. Themistius (l. 50) was his grandfather.

(*Ep.* 3)

It is meet that of Athens a trainer be lent ! If thou art come condescending
To praise Themistius, Muse, shrink not ! Uplift thy voice ! Hoist high
The sail to the topmast-yard ! Proclaim him victor with fists contending
And in that strife all-overcoming, who won him a double victory
At Epidaurus, and thence to the portals of Aiakus did he bear [hair.
Flower-garlands with green sprays twined, led on by the Graces of golden

Nemean VI.

For Alkimidas of Aegina, on his victory in the Boys' wrestling-match, B.C. 463 (?). His clan, the Bassidae, had had through successive generations alternations of distinction and obscurity in the great athletic contests, thus :—Agesimachus, (Sokleides), Praxidamas, (Theon), Alkimidas, those in brackets being undistinguished.

(*Str.* 1)

One is the race of men, and one the race of Gods ; but they
And we alike are children of the same Earth-mother's womb.
Yet some Power wholly diverse sunders us : we fade away
To nought, but evermore abides their heaven's brazen dome,
Through all the years, the eternal years, their never-shaken home.
Yet have we something in us like the Gods, the everlasting—
It may be this our mighty mind, our nature it may be—
Yet know we not what course by day, or 'neath night's wings on-hasting
Is marked out, for our feet to run therein, by Destiny.

(*Ant.* 1)

Now, now Alkimidas hath proved, plain for all eyes to see,
That this his House is like the fields that flame with golden grain,
Which, in the alternating years, now yield abundantly
To toiling men the bread of life that loads the laughing plain,
And in the year thereafter rest, to gather strength again.
Lo, now Aegina's athlete-son, from where in Nemea holden
Are those heart-gladdening contests, cometh home, who, following
The course whose chart was by the destiny of Zeus unfolden,
Hath proved no baffled glory-hunter in the wrestling-ring.

(*Ep.* 1)

His feet along the footprints of Praxidamas have raced,
Even those by one of his own blood, his father's father, traced,
Who, in Olympia victor, first brought home the olive-spray
For Aiakus' princely line's renown,
Five times at Isthmus won the crown,
At Nemea thrice, and wiped Sokleides' deedless stain away,
Of sons of Agesimachus the eldest—yet ungraced.

(*Str.* 2)

Howbeit he saw the crown of prowess won by athletes three,[1]
His sons, who dared the trial, and achieved. By Heaven's aid,
There is none other house beside that is by victory
Proclaimed the holder of more crowns in that stern strife essayed
At Hellas' inmost heart with gauntlets in the olive-glade.
Straight flew mine arrow to the mark, though I have told their story
In vaunting strain ; yet none the less true rang my bowstring then.
Come, O my Muse, unto this victor waft thy gale of glory,
The breath of song ! For when from earth have passed her mighty men,

(*Ant.* 2)

Then rescued from oblivion are their noble deeds by lay
And legend. Oh, the Bassid Clan hath little lack of these,
That house of ancient fame ! A freight of triumph-song bear they—
'Tis all their own. Well may their stately march of victories
Inspire the bards who till the fields of the Pierides
With plenteous theme for song ! 'Neath Phoebus' temple's holy shadow
One of the blood of this same clan, his strong hands gauntlet-bound,
Kallias, won his house a victory in Pytho's meadow,
Who erst with Golden-distaff Leto's children favour found.

(*Ep.* 2)

And brightly blazed at eventide his name by Castaly,
When rang the Graces' chant. The Bridge 'twixt sea and tireless sea
Gave honour to Kreontidas at that feast where the blood
Of bulls in third-year feasts is poured
Forth in the close of the Sea-lord.

1. The three younger brothers of Sokleides.

Brow-shadowed by the Lion's herb of Nemea once he stood
Victor 'neath Phlius' ancient hill dark-draped with many a tree.

(*Str.* 3)

For bards who tell the tale of old-time legend, broad and fair
On every hand stretch out the avenues that open lie
To glorify this world-famed isle : to her folk the Aiakids there
By their example gave of mighty deeds high destiny.
Across the land, across the sea, their name's renown flies high.
Yea, even to the Aethiop folk, who saw not home returning
Alive their chieftain Memnon, leapt that terrible renown
What time Achilles hurled on them grim conflict, vengeance-burning
For Nestor's son, and from his car to Troy's red plain sprang down,

(*Ant.* 3)

And when the point of that wrath-gleaming spear laid low the son
Of splendour-glowing Dawn. This was the track oft trod before,
A chariot-highway, where the bards of olden time rode on.
And I too follow in their path, inspired by legend-lore.
Yet still the wave that nighest rolls unto the steering-oar
Disquiets most the shipman's heart ; so, twofold burden bearing,
Alkimidas, on willing shoulders, to thy land I speed,
A messenger to tell that thou, thy new-won glory sharing
With thy far-famous house, this five-and-twentieth triumph-meed

(*Ep.* 3)

Hast gained in those proud conflict-lists which men name ' Games Divine.'
Yea also, and the hope of Polytimidas, and thine
Of garlands twain in Kronius' close were snatched, my son, from thee
By chance of lots. None can surpass
In training-lore Melesias :
He guides, like cunning charioteer, athletes to victory,
Teaching a swiftness fleet as dolphin dashing through the brine.

Nemean VII.

For Sogenes of Aegina, on his victory in the Boys' Pentathlon, B.C. 485 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

O Eileithyia enthroned for ever
By the Destinies deeply-brooding, hearken,
Thou Daughter of Hera the mighty, O giver
Of birth unto babes! Unholpen of thee
Never a child of man may see
The day-dawn break or the even darken;
Nor ever thy sister may we behold,
Young Hebe with limbs of glorious mould.
We receive not our breath for a like life all,
But to each doth his several destiny fall.
We are fettered by Fate. By thy grace alone
Chanted to-day are the glorious feats
Wrought in the contest of pentathletes
By Sogenes, son of Thearion.

(*Ant.* 1)

For he dwells in a city where cannot perish
Delight in song, where rule spear-clashing
Aiakids: eager are they to cherish
A spirit in strife of the Games well-tried.
If a man by achievements be glorified,
He hath dropped on the Muses' rills sun-flashing
Honey-sweet matter for song-delight.
For shrouded in gloom of oblivion's night
Are mighty deeds that be left unsung.
One mirror alone do we know that hath flung
Their reflection afar to endure for long,
If by grace of the Lady of Memory
Of the shining coronal, these may see
Their requital for toils in ringing song.

(*Ep.* 1)

Wise shipmen know, though the fair wind tarry,
It will blow on the third day; therefore they wait

Patiently, letting not gain-lust carry
Their freight to destruction. The small and the great
Alike to the bourne of death pass down.
But I deem that Odysseus inherits renown
Far, far surpassing his sufferings,
Through the sweet-voiced lay that Homer sings.

(*Str.* 2)

For over his winged poet-craft and its feigning
Hath some strange glamour of majesty brooded ;
And beguiled by his inspiration's constraining
Through his realm of faery lost we stray.
Ah, the general throng of mortals aye
Are blinded of heart ! Were their eyes not hooded
From discerning the truth, never Aias the strong,
For the armour wroth, as is told in song,
Had thrust through his heart the sword smooth-bright—
Aias, the mightiest man in fight,
Save Achilles, of all that to Ilium fared
By the west-wind wafted over the tide
With breath unswerving, to rescue the bride
Of Menelaus the golden-haired.

(*Ant.* 2)

Over all men alike the dark surge sweepeth
Of Hades, on fameless heads hath descended
And on men of renown : but honour keepeth
Their memories green whose after-fame
God causeth to wax ever fairer, the name
Of battle-helpers whose days are ended,
Even such as in old time journeyed on
Unto wide-bosomed earth's great navel-stone.
So buried 'neath Pytho's floor doth lie
Neoptolemus, there foredoomed to die
When Priam's town had been sacked by his hand,
Where also the Danaans travailed sore.
But he missed on the home-voyage Skyros' shore ;
So wandering came they to Ephyre-land.

(*Ep.* 2)

Short time in Molossia the mighty-hearted
Reigned ; but the honour was borne evermore
By the hero's posterity. Thence he departed
To the shrine of Apollo, and thitherward bore
Rich treasure, the choicest of all the prey
That was gathered from Troy. But there, in a fray
Embroiled touching sacrifice-meats, by the knife
Was he slain of a treacherous lover of strife.

(*Str.* 3)

But the Delphians were stricken with grief heart-thrilling—
Guest-welcomers they :—howbeit so dying
His fate foredoomed was he but fulfilling ;
For in that most ancient hallowed place
Was it destined that one of the royal race
Of the Aiakids should through the ages be lying
By Apollo's mansion of fair-walled pride,
And should over the hero-processions preside,
That Justice's fair name none may despise.
And, touching the issue, three words shall suffice :
No false witness is he, who there
Sitteth umpire o'er deeds by the mighty wrought.
Aegina, I fear not to utter my thought
Of the children whom thou unto Zeus didst bear,

(*Ant.* 3)

Even this—they have trodden a highway of glory
By inheritance theirs ; through deeds most mighty
Have they won it—yet needs not to dwell on their story.
Sweetly doth rest after labour come :
Even honey may cloy, and the flowers that bloom
Delightsome in gardens of Aphrodite.
Diversely all men's natures be wrought,
And each man draweth his several lot
In life ; but if any man think to attain
Unto bliss all-perfect, his hope is vain.

None know I to whom I can say that Fate
This consummation hath granted, to be
Inalienable. Thearion, thee
In season she bringeth to happy state;

(*Ep.* 3)

Thou hast shown aforetime a spirit daring
In gallant deeds: Fate suffereth not
That thy wisdom now know any impairing.
Thy guest-friend I, I abhor the thought
Of slander stealing in darkness to stain
The man that I love; nay, praise will I rain
Upon him, and crown him with glory; this
For the noble of heart meet guerdon is.

(*Str.* 4)

Nay, if any Achaian of those abiding
Beside the Ionian sea be near me,
He shall nowise blame me: I rest confiding
On my friendship-tie: mid the folk of my land
With clear gaze meeting their eyes I stand.
Of the charge of presumptuous dealing I clear me;
All violence thrust I, a hater of strife,
From my feet. May the residue of my life
Flow blithesomely! He shall testify
Who knoweth me, whether with slander and lie
I jangle the music of life as I go.
Sogenes, son of the Eupatrid Clan,
The mark-line never I overran
When I shot swift speech—as one that should throw

(*Ant.* 4)

The bronze-headed dart with a cast that delivers[1]
Neck and sinew from wrestling with sweat down-pouring
Ere the limbs strain hard where the sunglare quivers—

1. If, in the Pentathlum, a competitor broke the rules by overrunning the mark in distance-throwing of the dart (which came just before the wrestling), he was disqualified from further competition.

Never, I swear it! If toil there hath been,
The delight that succeedeth is yet more keen.
Nay, forgive, if my song over-loudly was soaring
For old times' glory! In these my lays
No niggard am I of the victor's praise.
Easy it is flower-garlands to twine;
Nay, but tarry a space till this Muse of mine
Shall have knit the gold to the ivory
And the lily-like blossom of stone that she drew[1]
From the depths where it lurked beneath spray-dew
That falls on the face of the slumbrous sea.

(*Ep.* 4)

But bethink thee of Zeus the while thou raisest
For Nemean triumph the far-ringing song
Soft-swelling. 'Tis meet that the while thou praisest
Him who sitteth enthroned the Immortals among,
Such praise be chanted in this your land
With reverent voice by the chorus-band,
For that here of his seed begotten, 'tis sung,
Of an Isle-nymph mother hath Aiakus sprung

(*Str.* 5)

To be for the fair-famed land of his mother
A ruler of cities, in all thy labour
To be ever a loyal friend and brother,
O Herakles! If a man may prove
Of his fellow-man any fruition of love,
Then well may we say that neighbour to neighbour
Is a joy that is worth all else beside
If with steadfast heart in his love he abide.
Now if also a God will sanction this,
By thy favour, O queller of giants, it is

1. Coral. The contrast is between the evanescent wreath of flowers, and a coronal of gold, ivory and coral.

That, rendering aye love-homage meet
To his father, fain would Sogenes
Dwell mid ancestral memories
In the stately-builded sacred street

(*Ant.* 5)

Where his home 'twixt thy temples doth stand, which face him
At his goings forth, as with blessing laden :
Like a chariot's twin yokes, so they embrace him.
And thee, O Herakles ever-blest,
It beseemeth to win to grant his request
Hera's Lord and the grey-eyed Maiden.
For oft upon mortals canst thou bestow
Help in the hour of the bitter woe
Of hopelessly tangled perplexities.
Oh wouldst thou but link with the life of these
All steadfast strength, through youth's glad day
Weaving its web of happiness still
Till an easeful eld thy task fulfil !
May their children's children possess for aye 100

(*Ep.* 5)

The honour that now is theirs, and ever
Win greater glory in days to be !
But with all my soul I protest that never
Hath Neoptolemus' name by me
Been befouled by slander dishonouring !—[1]
Yet thrice, four times to repeat this thing
Is folly like his of whom children tire
As he babbles ' Corinth hath Zeus for sire.'

1. This reference seems to be to Paean VI (in the Fragments), at which offence had been taken. There Apollo is said to have slain him for temple-desecration. In this Ode Pindar implies that it was not through his fault, but his fate, that he died.

Nemean VIII.

For Deinias of Aegina, on his victory in the quarter-mile (double-stadium) race, B.C. 459 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

Queen of the beauty of youth, thou herald of Aphrodite's celestial yearning,
Who on eyelids of boys and of maidens enthroned, in hands spell-weaving for ever art turning
Our destinies to and fro, unto this man allotting joy, and to that man grief,
Sweet is it for one who hath transgressed never in aught that he doeth the right's due measure
To be suffered to grasp the fulfilment of life's most noble aims, of his heart's dream-treasure.

(*Ant.* 1)

Such spirits were they who dispensed the Cyprian's gifts in the hour of the love-communion
Of Olympian Zeus and the Nymph Aegina, and born was Oenone's king of their union,
One peerless in prowess and counsel; and many a time men prayed to behold that chief;
For of all the heroes that dwelt around him exceeding fain were their goodliest flower,
Unchallenged of any, to bow in subjection before him, obeying his sovran power,

(*Ep.* 1)

Alike the heroes that marshalled the host in Athens' crag-built town,
And they that in Sparta traced their long descent from Pelops down.
Lo, I come as a suppliant clasping the holy knees of Aiakus, bringing
For his city and people a Lydian crown fair-woven, with sweet song ringing,
For the foot-race victories Deinias and Megas his father at Nemea won;
For longest enduring mid men is prosperity sown with the blessing of God thereon;

(*Str.* 2)

So of old were riches on Kinyras heaped in Cyprus ringed with the sea-crests hoary.
Lo, upon light-poised feet do I stand, drawing breath till again I take up the story;
For in manifold wise many tales have been told; but to coin new thoughts and to put to assay
Of the touchstone—this is perilous all. A dainty morsel are heroes' praises
For envy's fang: she leaps on the great, but against the mean not a hand she raises.

(*Ant.* 2)

By her was Telamon's son devoured, by whose hand through his side was his own sword driven.
For the tongue-tied, how stout soever of heart, when the bitter strife of words is striven,
Is oblivion's thrall; but shiftful lying beareth the goodliest guerdons away. [uncaring;
For by fraudful voting the Danaans showed to Odysseus favour, for truth
And Aias, robbed of the golden armour, wrestled with death in his mad despairing.

(*Ep.* 2)

Ha, diverse the wounds were they tore in the quivering flesh of foes, these twain,
When under the onset of storming spears men reeled in the battle-strain
Now o'er the fresh-stricken corse of Achilles, anon in the conflict-travail
Of days wide-ruining! Ay, for of old the hate of malignant cavil
Consorted with cunning speech, and imagined deceit and the venomous sneer. Ah yes, [tenness.
The bright names still it assails, and exalts the abjects' fame which is rot-

(*Str.* 3)

Never in me be such spirit as this, O Father Zeus! May I still be cleaving
To the paths of a life of innocency, and so unto death may I pass down, leaving [land
To my sons no name of evil repute! Some pray for gold, and others for

Without limit: be I to my fellow-men well-pleasing, ever extolling the lover
Of righteousness, ever rebuking the doer of wrong, till the earth my limbs shall cover.

(*Ant.* 3)

Ever groweth the fame of a noble life, as a tree that is quickened by dews down-drifted:
Yea, so by poets inspired and righteous high as the heavens its glory is lifted.
Of manifold sort be the uses of friends; but the chiefest of all is the helping hand
In trouble. Yet also doth happiness crave some certain assurance of bliss to inherit.
It is nowise within my power, O Megas, to call back again into life thy spirit:

(*Ep.* 3)

Nay, vain is the end of baseless hopes! Yet for thee and thy Chariad line
I lightly may rear a pillar of song for feet of fair omen, thine
And thy son's. With gladness unfeigned am I now the exultant praise outpealing
That befitteth your deeds. By the spell of song hath the singer oft brought healing
To the faintness of toil: yea, victory-chants processional rang in the olden days,
Long ere the flame of the feud 'twixt Kadmus' sons and Adrastus began to blaze.

Nemean IX.

For Chromius of Etna, on a victory in the chariot-race, won, not at Nemea, but at Sikyon, B.C. 474 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

We will lead the revel, O Queens of Song, from Apollo's Sikyonian fane
Unto new-built Etna,—whose doors flung wide are too strait the throng of her guests to contain—

On unto Chromius' wealthy palace. Upraise ye the chant of lips sweet-singing!
He hath mounted his car of the steeds triumphant, proclaiming a hymn in the Mother's praise
And of her twin offspring who ward in fellowship Pytho through everlasting days.

(*Str.* 2)

A saying there is among men—'*It befits not that great deeds done be amerced of fame*
And be buried in earth.' The chant celestial is meet the renown of such to acclaim.
Awake, awake ye the pealing lyre, awake the flute in the honour ringing
Of the crown of contests of steeds which Adrastus founded in Phoebus' name beside
Asopus' streams! When I tell their renown, in my far-ringing praise shall be magnified

(*Str.* 3)

That hero-king who exalted his city and made it glorious, reigning there,
With festivals new, and contests of strength of the athlete, and chariots carven fair,
Being exiled from Argos his home ancestral by Amphiaraus the aweless-hearted
And by baleful sedition; for Talaus' sons were lords no longer therein, overborne
By civil strife. When a stronger cometh, a realm from the rightful possessor is torn.

(*Str.* 4)

Yet the Talaïds gave for a pledge of alliance the woman destined her lord to betray,
Eriphyle, to Oikles' son; and now of the bright-haired Danaans greatest were they;
And leading a valorous host of men on a march ill-omened to Thebes they departed,

To the burg seven-gated: but Kronos' Son would speed them not from their home to fare
In their madness of heart, but hurling the flickering levin he bade from the journey forbear.

(*Str.* 5)

And so to a doom foreshown to their eyes that company marched with spear and targe
All-brazen, and war-steed trappings;—and there for ever they left on Ismenus' marge
Sweet hope of their home-return, and fed with their war-grey corpses the smoke upsoaring.
Seven pyres ravined up those young men's limbs; but for Amphiaraus Zeus with the might
Of his thunderbolt clave broad-breasted earth, and hid the man and his steeds from sight

(*Str.* 6)

Ere his warrior-soul should be shamed by a thrust in the back from Periklymenus' spear:
For when panic is sent from Heaven, even the sons of the Gods must flee in fear.
If it be possible, O Kronion, such trial of manhood with spears blood-pouring,
Such struggle for life and death, I fain would defer to the uttermost. Nay, I implore,
Grant thou to the sons of Etna a portion in governance fair for evermore,

(*Str.* 7)

Zeus Father, and wed her people to pageant-splendours through gladsome streets outrolled.
Lo, there dwell chariot-lovers and men who have spirits above the lust of gold;—
Sooth, hard to believe is the thing I have said: greed steals away honour by secret cajoling,
Honour, renown-bringer. Hadst thou to Chromius been shield-bearer in battle's day
Mid footmen or horsemen, or clash of ships, thou hadst judged what peril he faced in the fray.

(*Str.* 8)

For in war it was Honour the Goddess that girded his warrior-spirit with might to withstand
The War-god's havoc of onslaught. Few there are that have strength of heart and hand [rolling.
Backward to hurl on the foemen's ranks the imminent war-cloud nearer
Yet is it told how Hector's fame bloomed fair by Skamander in those old wars;
And even so on the banks of Helorus, the deep-channelled stream walled in by scaurs,

(*Str.* 9)

At the ford men call the Passage of Rhea dawned his light of victory
On Agesidamus' son in his earliest manhood: in days thereafter hath he
Won many a triumph on dust-grey plains and on neighbour seas: I will tell their story.
But to toils by the strength of youth and the Right achieved there succeedeth when eld draws nigh
An even of calm. Let him know he is dowered with wondrous bliss by the Dwellers on high.

(*Str.* 10)

For if any, together with wealth abounding, have won him renown far-shining bright, [height.
It can nowise be that a mortal's feet may attain any loftier mountain-
Peace loveth the banquet: a conqueror's fame like a tree grows with fresh-blossoming glory
Watered by soft-dropping dews of song. By the goblet the bard's voice waxeth bold.
Let them mingle the mazer that heraldeth sweetly triumph's processional-chant outrolled,

(*Str.* 11)

And in silver chalices bear around to the feasters the potent child of the vine,
In the cups that Chromius' horses won him, and sent with the wreaths that for victors they twine
In Phoebus' honour in holy Sikyon. Zeus, let me chant the fame, I implore thee,

Of Chromius' prowess by help of the Graces, and outsing every rival in praise
Of his victory, hurling my shaft of song true-aimed to the mark that the Muses place.

Nemean X.

For Theaius of Argos, on his victory in wrestling at Argos, B.C. 463 (?). He had previously been victor in wrestling at the Pythian, Nemean, and Isthmian Games, and was in training for the Olympian.

(*Str.* 1)

Sing, Graces, the city of Danaus and of his fifty daughters splendour-throned,
Argos the dwelling of Hera, meet for a Goddess: she shineth starry-zoned
With countless achievements of chivalrous deeds of valiant heroes' essaying.
Overlong to tell were the story of Perseus, the tale of the Gorgon's [slaying.
Many the cities were that were founded by Epaphus' hands in Egypt-land.
Nor Hypermnestra from duty erred when alone she resolved to unsheathe not the brand.

(*Ant.* 1)

And Diomedes immortal was made by a Goddess, the golden-haired, grey-eyed.
Stricken with thunderbolts of Zeus the earth at the gates of Thebes yawned [wide,
And swallowed up Oikles' son the seer, a storm-cloud battle-laden.
And peerless the land from of old is in beauty of fair-tressed matron and maiden:
Yea, this Zeus testified, thitherward coming for love of Alkmene and Danae. [she.
In Adrastus' father and Lynkeus the fruit of wisdom and justice blended

(*Ep.* 1)

And she nursed the spear-renown of Amphitryon: mailed in bronze he went forth to fight
Teleboan foes, and was raised the while to the crowning summit of fortune's height,

Being linked in affinity with Zeus, for then did the King of Immortals,
Taking upon him Amphitryon's form, pass in through the palace-portals,
And aweless Herakles there he begat, who hath Hebe, of Goddesses fairest, for bride
Who with Hera her mother walks in Olympus, walks at the Marriage-perfecter's side.

(*Str.* 2)

Ah, but my tongue would fail me to tell all glories wherein the hallowed close
Of Argos hath shared ; and ill to encounter is jealousy of praise-weary foes.
Yet, yet awaken the lyre of the lovely strings ! Be thy rapt meditation
Of the prowess of wrestlers ! The strife for the buckler of bronze forth summons a nation
To the sacrifice of oxen to Hera, to conflict's decision, where Oulias' son,
Theaius, the twice-triumphant, to rest from the toils so unflinchingly borne hath won.

(*Ant.* 2)

And at Pytho once o'er the Hellene host was he victor, and won by the gracious will
Of Fortune at Isthmus and Nemea crowns ; and he gave to the Muses new acres to till
Thrice at the mountain-gates of the sea in the athlete-contests excelling,
And thrice on the hallowed ground where stood mid pastures Adrastus' dwelling.
Zeus Father, his lips are sealed, but thou knowest his heart's desire, for in thine hands rest
All issues of deeds. He prayeth thy grace with a toil-strong heart, with a dauntless breast.

(*Ep.* 2)

All that I sing is known unto him and to whoso striveth to win the crown
Of that which of athlete-contests is chief—yea, Pisa beareth the highest renown
In Herakles' ordinance ;—yet was it sweet, that strain for his victory ringing,
When mid sacred Athenian rites he twice heard voices the prelude sing-

Of processional chants, and the limpid fruit of the olive to Hera's city came
In shrines fire-hardened, in pictured vases, unto the folk of heroic fame.

(*Str.* 3)

Full often, Theaius, the glory of contests triumphant attendeth the far-famed race
Of thy mother's sires by the Graces' favour, and by the Tyndarid heroes' grace.
Were I unto Thrasyklus kinsman, and Antias, then with assurance unfailing
I would claim in Argos proudly to walk, the light of mine eyes never veiling.
For with how many victories hath this city of fleet steeds blossomed, this Proitus' town!
Four times in Corinthian glens and from hands of Kleonae's sons she received the crown;

(*Ant.* 3)

And from Sikyon home with silver laden they came, with cups for the blood of the vine;
And they fared from Pellene with shoulders mantled with woof of the fleece soft-woven fine.
But the countless prizes of works of bronze, their tale can we nowise measure—
For the time would fail us to reckon their number, too brief were all our leisure—
Which Kleitor and Tegea-town, and the burgs Achaian each on her mountain-throne,
And the Hill Lykaian by Zeus' course, offered, by prowess of feet and of hands to be won.

(*Ep.* 3)

Since Kastor and Polydeukes his brother came for guest-welcome to Pamphaes,
No marvel it is that ever thereafter it should be inborn in the race of these
To be mighty men in the athlete-lists, for these twain, warders abiding
Of the wide-spreading dancing-lawns of Sparta, still unseen are presiding

Along with Hermes and Herakles, and mete out all fair governance due ;
And to righteous men they have great regard, for the race of the Gods is faithful and true.

(*Str.* 4)

Now these twin brethren with lives interchanging pass with their father Zeus one day ;
Through the next in the crypts of the underworld where the gorge of Therapnae yawns must they stay ;
And so fulfil they an equal lot, for, when the choice was given,
Thus Polydeukes willed to live, and not to abide in Heaven [fight :
Alway and wholly a brotherless God, when Kastor his brother perished in
For him did Idas, wroth for the raided kine, with the point of his bronze spear smite.

(*Ant.* 4)

For down from Taÿgetus Lynkeus gazing afar, in an oak's hollow trunk had espied [eyed.
These twain in ambush ; for he of all men dwelling on earth was keenest-
And straightway thither did Idas and Lynkeus hasten with feet swift-flying,
And suddenly compassed an awful deed when low lay Kastor dying.
Yet they suffered, those sons of Aphareus, dread retribution at Zeus' hands. Came straightway
Leda's son Polydeukes in chase : by the tomb of their father they turned to bay.

(*Ep.* 4)

Thence did they wrench the carven stone which graceth the dead who in Hades lie,
And hurled it against Polydeukes' breast ; howbeit they crushed him not thereby,
Nor drave him backward ; but onward he rushed with his lance as the lightning flashing,
And sped against Lynkeus the brazen point thereof through the ribs of him crashing.
And Zeus against Idas hurled a smouldering thunderbolt of fiery glow.
So together unmourned were the twain consumed. Hard is it to strive with a mightier foe.

(*Str.* 5)

Thence to his mighty brother Kastor Tyndareus' son returned straightway,
And not yet dead he found him, but drawing his breath in shuddering gasps he lay.
Then from his eyes the hot tears burst, and broken with groanings panted
His wild cry forth, ' O Father Kronion, shall no release be granted
From anguish ? With this my brother, O King, command thou that death take also me !
From a man bereaved of friends is the glory departed ; in suffering few there be

(*Ant.* 5)

That will loyally share with a man his trouble ! ' So cried he ; and Zeus before him stood
And in this wise spake : ' Mine own son thou art, but he that lieth here in his blood
Was after thee gotten of mortal seed by the hero-lord of thy mother.
But nathless choices twain do I grant unto thee ; choose one or other :
If thy will be from death to escape and from grey old age that all men hate and fear,
And to dwell in Olympus with me and Athene and Ares of darkness-shrouded spear,

(*Ep.* 5)

This lot is thine to take ; but if for thy brother thou strivest so earnestly
That steadfastly minded thou art that he shall in all things equally share with thee,
Then for the half of thy time shalt thou breathe with the underworld-gloom enfolden,
And for half thy time shall thy dwelling be in Heaven's palaces golden.'
So spake the Father, and not for a moment doubted the son as touching his choice.
And the death-smitten eyes of bronze-mailed Kastor did Zeus unseal, and unchained his voice.

Nemean XI.

This has nothing to do with the Nemean Games, but is an installation-ode for Aristagoras of Tenedos, on his election as president of the Council, B.C. 446 (?). He was indeed an athlete, and might have won distinction in the Great Games, had his parents allowed him to compete.

(*Str.* 1)

O Hestia, child of Rhea, who hast city-halls in ward,
Sister of Zeus most high and Hera throned beside her lord,
To thy bower welcome Aristagoras with gracious mien ;
His feres to approach thy gleaming sceptre welcome graciously,
Who keep in safety Tenedos the while they honour thee.

(*Ant.* 1)

Thee oft as chief of Goddesses with spilt wine reverence they,
And oft with reek of sacrifice, while peal out lyre and lay.
At Guest-ward Zeus' unfailing feast is worshipped Justice' Queen ;
So with fair fame and heart unvext may Aristagoras
On to the consummation of his twelve-months' office pass.

(*Ep.* 1)

His sire Agesilas I count as blest as man may be
For wondrous goodly form and fearless inborn constancy.
Yet, though a man have wealth and all-surpassing comeliness,
Though he show might pre-eminent in athletes' conflict-stress,
Let him bethink him—mortal limbs his raiment doth array,
And the last vesture he shall don will be the grave-mound's clay.

(*Str.* 2)

Yet that his fellow-burghers' praise acclaim his deeds is meet.
Well may we grace his name in song whose strains ring honey-sweet ;
For glorious victories six and ten the peoples dwelling nigh
Crowned Aristagoras and his clan, a clan of peerless fame,
With wreaths for wrestling and the strife Pankratian proud of name.

(*Ant.* 2)

Yet ah, his parents' faint-heart fears their stalwart son restrained,
That Pytho's and Olympia's crowns were unessayed, ungained ;
Else, by the Great Oath's sanctity I swear that sure am I,

To Castaly and Kronos' tree-girt hill had he but gone,
He had returned with triumph-crowns from rival champions won,
(*Ep.* 2)
When he had kept the fifth-year feast ordained of Herakles,
And bound his hair with wreaths that gleamed with light of victories.
But among mortals one is from his blessings' height down-thrust
By empty-thoughted self-conceit : through overmuch mistrust
Of his own strength another letteth slip the honour due,
Because a timorous spirit caught his hand and backward drew.
(*Str.* 3)
To old Peisander's Spartan blood hath Aristagoras claim,
Well may ye trow : from Amyklae he with Orestes came,
And hither led Aeolian ranks in brazen battle-gear.
His mother's brother Melanippus' blood with his, we know,
Was by Ismenus blent. The might of days of long ago
(*Ant.* 3)
Will in alternate generations bring strong men to birth,
As harvests spring not every year from tilth of this dark earth,
Nor are our fruit-trees wont as year sweeps round by circling year
To bear in wealth unvarying fruit from odour-breathing flowers,
But rest each second year. And so this mortal race of ours
(*Ep.* 3)
By Destiny's breeze is driven. Comes from Zeus no guiding sign ;
Yet we embark on many a venturous emprise : yea, we pine
For exploits many : yea, enthralled by hope insatiate are
Our natures. But Fate's tides from man's foreknowledge roll afar.
In quest of gain heed measure due. The madness of desire
For unattainable ambitions hotter burns than fire.

THE ISTHMIAN ODES.

Isthmian I.

For Herodotus of Thebes, on his victory in the chariot-race, B.C. 458 (?). The poet commences with an apology to Delos for making this ode take precedence of the completion of a paean to Apollo, which he was composing for the island of Keos (Paean IV).

(*Str.* 1)

Mother mine, O Thebe of shield all-golden,
Me shall thy sovran behest embolden,
How full soever mine hands be, to lay
All other service aside for to-day.
O Delos, thou for whose exaltation
Hath my soul been outpoured, have no indignation!
What to a son true-hearted can be
More dear than a mother? Ah, yield to my plea,
Isle of Apollo! By grace of Heaven
Shall coupled fulfilment ere long be given
Unto hymnal-homages twain by me,

(*Ant.* 1)

When to Him of the hair unshorn I come paying
Due honour with choral dance-arraying
In Keos by sea-waves weltered about—
Strains hailed by her shipmen with jubilant shout—
And honour the Isthmian ridge that doth sunder
Two seas that against its crag-walls thunder. 10
To Kadmus' people from Isthmus have gone
Six crowns in her athlete-contests won

To grace with triumphant victory's glory
My motherland, where, as is told in story,
Of Alkmena was born that aweless son

(*Ep.* 1)

At whom quaked Geryon's Hounds, that never had quaked before.
For Herodotus frame I an honour-lay, for his four-horse team,
And the reins that himself swayed, needing none other man's chariot-lore.
I will sing so that he as a Kastor or Iolaus shall seem ;
For these of all heroes were mightiest charioteers on earth.
Unto the one Lacedaemon, Thebes to the other gave birth.

(*Str.* 2)

More athlete-contests did these adventure
Than any of champions beside dared enter,
And with brazen tripods their halls they graced,
And with caldrons and goblets of gold rich-chased ;
For they tasted the rapture of strife victorious,
And they bore thence garlands of triumph glorious ;
And ever their prowess shone clear and bright,
Alike in the course where in eagle-flight
Raced runners with vestureless limbs white-flashing,
And when with the shields on their shoulders clashing
Men ran arrayed in the harness of fight,

(*Ant.* 2)

And in all the deeds of their hands—in hurling
The javelin, and when they sped far-whirling
Across the field the discus of stone :—
For as yet was no fivefold contest known ;
But each of the several strifes was striven
By itself, and to each was its own prize given.
So, many a time and oft, their hair
Wreathed with the victory-garlands fair,
These twain where Dirke's fount upleapeth,
Or where Eurotas' swift flood sweepeth,
Bowed thanking the nurturing waters there,

(*Ep.* 2)

By Dirke, Iphikles' son, his descent from the Dragon who drew ;
    By Eurotas, Tyndareus' scion, who dwelt the Achaians among,
In his highland home of Therapnae. And now farewell unto you !
    O'er Poseidon and holy Isthmus I cast the mantle of song,
And over Onchestus' shores ; and as this man's honours I tell,
I will sing of the fate to Asopodorus his sire that befell.

(*Str.* 3)

And Orchomenus' fields in my lay shall be chanted,
Henceforth by his father's memory haunted,
    Who was cast on her strand, a shipwrecked wight,
    From the boundless waters, in evil plight ;
But with welcoming kindness that land embraced him.
Yet his house's fortune hath now upraised him
    To behold once more the unclouded ray
    Of prosperity's sun of the former day.
Yea, he who hath suffered sore tribulation
Wins forethought for pain's one compensation,
    And bears it thenceforth in his heart for aye.

(*Ant.* 3)

If a man seek noble achievement's attaining,
With his soul's full energies upward straining,
    Unsparing alike of cost and pains,
    Meet is it that when at the last he gains
The prize, our ennobling praise he inherit
Lavished on him with ungrudging spirit.
    For easy it is for the bard inspired,
    When by hard toil won is the goal desired,
To acclaim his endeavours with glad laudation,
And, along with the man, that the fame of his nation
    Be set on high to be world-admired.

(*Ep.* 3)

Sweet unto diverse men is the meed that from labour they reap,
    To the shepherd, the ploughman, the fowler, to him who is fed from
Yet of these each strives but the wolf of hunger at bay to keep ; [the sea.
    But who wins in the Games renown, or in battle victory,

When all men extol his achievement, receiveth the highest gain,
For praises as flowers on his head do strangers and citizens rain.

(*Str.* 4)

O, well it beseemeth our lips, the awaking
Of thanksgiving-praise to the King earth-shaking,
Who is also our neighbour, Kronos' son,
He who sped of his kindness our chariots on,
Who is God of the swift steed goalward racing.
Meet is it withal that our song be praising,
Amphitryon, those great sons of thine,
And the Minyan valley's recess divine,
And Eleusis' Grove world-celebrated
To the Goddess Demeter consecrated,
And Euboea's course's curving line.

(*Ant.* 4)

And with these I acclaim, as in holy paean,
Thy sacred precinct by heroes Achaean
Reared, Protesilaus, in Phylake.
But to tell over every victory
Which Hermes the Lord of the Games hath given 60
To the steeds that in many a race have striven
To win for Herodotus triumph's bay,
The narrowing limits of this my lay
Take from me. Yea, and often the keeping
Of silence bringeth a richer reaping
Of joy, seeing Envy is balked of her prey.

(*Ep.* 4)

Upborne on the shining wings of the sweet-voiced Muses nine,
With garlands from Pytho, with choicest wreaths from Alpheus' flood
And Olympia's contests won, may he his hands entwine
For the honour of Thebes seven-gated. But if one secretly brood
Over hoarded wealth, and at other men mouth, he considereth not
That to death he is rendering up his soul—and his name shall rot.

Isthmian II.

For Xenokrates of Akragas, and his son Thrasybulus, on the victory in the chariot-race won by their charioteer Nikomachus, B.C. 472 (?). The ode was composed after the death of Xenokrates, and hence is addressed to his son.

(*Str.* 1)

The singers of old, Thrasybulus, who mounted the car of the Queens of Song,
The golden-tired, giving voice to the ringing lyre and the tuneful tongue,
Shot lightly the arrows of honey-sweet strains in the fair one's praise,
Whosoever by bright summer-bloom of lovely form and face
Stirred hearts to dream upon splendour-throned Aphrodite's grace.

(*Ant.* 1)

For then was the Muse not yet a lover of gain, nor a hireling was she.
Nor then honey-throated Terpsichore sold the melting melody
Of her lays, nor with faces silver-masked did they tread the stage.
But now she biddeth us heed the word of the Argive sage
Which cometh all too near to the truth in this our age :

(*Ep.* 1)

'*'Tis money, 'tis money that maketh the man !* ' he said,
When his friends forsook him so soon as his wealth had fled.
But enough—thou art wise. O, famous afar
Is the Isthmian victory won by the car
Thy swift steeds drew, that I sing.
For Poseidon gave to thy sire renown,
And the Dorian garland, the parsley crown
O'er Xenokrates' hair did he fling.

(*Str.* 2)

And so did he honour the lord of the goodly chariot, Akragas' star.
And at Krisa looked down on him graciously Apollo prevailing afar,
And gave to him glory. In gleaming Athens did he attain
Mid the sons of Erechtheus the grace of triumph ; nor might he complain
Of the skill of the hands that lashed his horses and swayed the rein,

(*Ant.* 2)

Nikomachus' hands, that gave to his steeds full rein at the moment due,
He whom the truce-bearing heralds Elean of Zeus Kronion knew,
Who publish the Season of Games ; for his hospitality well
They remembered ; and sweetly their voices proclaimed o'er the hallowed dell
His triumph, when he on the lap of golden Victory fell

(*Ep.* 2)

In their land, which they name the Grove of Olympus' Lord,
Where the sons of Aenesidamus gained the award
Of honours whose memory aye is enscrolled.
For, O Thrasybulus, known from of old
To the halls of thine ancient line
Is the winsome charm of the song that leaps
From the lips, as on the procession sweeps
In triumph for victory—thine !

(*Str.* 3)

For not uphillward nor steep is the path, if the bard is fain to guide
The feet of the praises of Helicon's Maids with famous men to abide.
May song's shaft sped from mine hand as far past all else fly
As in sweetness of spirit unto Xenokrates none came nigh.
Amidst of his townsmen ever a prince of courtesy,

(*Ant.* 3)

After the wont of the Panhellenes horse-rearing he fostered still :
He was constant at every feast of the Gods : no wind's breath blew so chill
On his guest-fain board as to make him furl his canvas-spread ;
But far as the Phasis in summertide's gales the fame of him sped,
And in wintertide anchored his guest-renown in broad Nile's bed.[1]

(*Ep.* 3)

What though the cravings of envy like veils bedim
The vision of many men's souls ?—ah, never let him

1. He entertained guests from as far east as the utmost limits of the Black Sea (which was closed to navigation in winter), and from as far south as Egypt.

Hush into coward silence the praise
Of his father's prowess, nor these my lays!
Not statue-like idly to stand
Did I fashion them! Nikesippus, bear
This, to my loyal friend to declare,
When thou comest to that far land.

Isthmian III.

For Melissus of Thebes, on his victory in the chariot-race at Nemea. B.C. 477 (?). This ode is a mere prelude to IV: it is in the same metre, and many scholars are of opinion that they were originally one.

(*Str.*)

What man soever hath prospered in winning prizes of high renown
In the Games, or is mighty in wealth, who yet in his spirit crusheth down
Pestilent arrogance, worthy is he to be graced with his townsmen's praise;
For of thee, O Zeus, all excellence cometh that mortal men doth upraise;
And longer abideth their bliss who reverence thee: with the froward-hearted
Through life it abides not, but lo, as a suddenly vanishing dream hath departed.

(*Ant.*)

It beseems that in guerdon of glorious achievement the deeds of the valiant we sing;
It beseems that mid triumph-procession with grace of loving welcoming
Should our praises conspire to exalt him! In contests twain hath fortune fair
Favoured Melissus, to turn his heart to delightsome joy from care.
In the glens of the Isthmus he won for him crowns: where the thunder-throated lion
Prowled through the cavernous Nemean dell, he proclaimed him Thebe's scion

(*Ep.*)

In the chariot-contest triumphant. He bringeth
No stain on the mighty name
Of the prowess his sires made glorious
Of old. Well know ye the fame
Which Kleonymus won, as the old lay singeth
How his chariot raced victorious.
By the mother akin to the Labdakid Clan, they walked in the ways of wealth, and they trained
With manifold toil the yoke of four.
But time with its onward-rolling days bringeth change upon change : unscarred, unpained
Are none but the Gods' seed evermore.

Isthmian IV.

For Melissus of Thebes, on his victory in the Pankration at the Isthmus, probably in the year preceding the chariot-victory at Nemea.

(*Str.* 1)

By grace of the Gods there be countless paths far-spreading before my feet ;
But, Melissus, thou at the Isthmian Games hast shown me a highway meet
Whereon to follow in song the track of the prowess of thy line
Wherein the sons of Kleonymus ever have prospered by help divine,
And so pass on to the term of mortal life ; but ever shifting
Are the winds of fate that swoop upon man, and drive him chartless-drifting.

(*Ant.* 1)

Ay, the story of these from of yore is told, how with honour in Thebes they were named.
Warders they were of the tribes dwelling round, and in arrogance brawling unshamed

No part they had ; and what records soever there be of the men which
have died,
Or of yet living men, such as fly wind-blown through the whole world far
and wide,
Records of limitless glory, these they attained in their fulness receiving :
Yea, Herakles' Pillars they touched by the gallant deeds of their line's
achieving ;—

(*Ep.* 1)

But let none press on to achievement that reacheth
Farther beyond that bound !—
And in that house many a lover
Of the rearing of steeds was found.
And they joyed in the lore that the War-god teacheth.
But ere one day's hours passed over,
The merciless sleet-laden tempest of war had bereft of hero-scions four
That hearth once happy ; but now again
After the wintry gloom of the months of changeful vesture, the earth once
more
Hath blossomed with roses of crimson grain

(*Str.* 2)

By the will of Heaven. The Shaker of Earth, who hath at Onchestus his
halls,
And whose mansion is on the sea-lashed ridge afront of Corinth's walls,
Even he bestoweth upon that house this hymn of wondrous praise,
And the olden glory of far-famed deeds from her bed doth he upraise
Where erst she had fallen on sleep, but now is awakened, and shines re-
splendent
Over all her form, as the Morning Star mid the stars is a light trans-
scendent,—

(*Ant.* 2)

That olden glory which even on Athens' fields proclaimed the renown
Of a chariot-triumph ; then in Adrastus' Games at Sikyon-town
Gave wreathèd leaves of such old-time song as these of our own days are.
Nor yet at the national contests failed they to ride the curvèd car ;

But they joyed in contending with all the Hellenes, in spending on steeds their treasure.
But unhonoured, unsung, is the man that spareth his might against others to measure.

(*Ep.* 2)

Yea, even when champions in strife be contending,
Till the end in uncertainty
Her face Queen Fortune veileth ;
For triumph now giveth she
And anon defeat ; but at whiles in the ending
The craft of the weaker prevaileth
To cast to the earth the stronger. Ye know of the prowess of Aias the blood-stained fame,
How, when the night was now far spent,
He cast himself on his own sword, thereby bringing reproach and abiding shame
On the sons of Hellenes that Troyward went.

(*Str.* 3)

But lo, he is honoured of Homer the wide world over, who set on high
All knightly prowess of Aias ; and his god-gifted poesy
Hath taught the measure whereby all other bards must frame the lay :
For a noble song passeth down the years with a voice that liveth for aye,
And over the harvest-abounding earth, and across the sea for ever
Goeth the sunbright shining of noble deeds, to be quenchèd never.

(*Ant.* 3)

May the Muses to us be gracious, that so we may kindle a beacon-light
Of song for Melissus, a wreath that shall worthily crown the pankratian might
Of the son of the House of Telesias ; for he showeth in conflict's toil
The courage of roaring lions, and coupled therewith the fox's guile
Who lies on his back,[1] so holding at bay the eagle's swoop down-rushing.
So cunning and strength must alike be used for the adversary's crushing.

1. The best position for presenting a front all teeth and claws to an assailant from the air.

(*Ep.* 3)

For not by nature was this man dowered
With Orion's giant height;
Mean was he to outward showing,
But with iron-heavy might
In the grapple his foe he overpowered.
So of old for Antaius' o'erthrowing [bore
To his dwelling in Libya's corn-land came a man low-statured, a hero who
A spirit unflinching in conflict-strain, [ing o'er
A scion of Thebes whose wrestling-grip should for ever stay him from roof-
With the skulls of strangers Poseidon's fane,

(*Str.* 4)

Even the son of Alkmena, who passed to Olympus after that he [sea,
Had tracked all lands, and traversed the cliff-walled face of the surf-white
Had slain the sea-rovers, and safe for voyagers made the sea's highway.
And now by the Aegis-bearer in glorious bliss he dwelleth for aye,
As a friend is honoured of all the Immortals, with Hebe hath made affiance,
Is lord of a golden palace, is kinsman to Hera by spousal-alliance.

(*Ant.* 4)

For him above the Elektran Gate we burghers the feast prepare,
And the crown-like ring of the altars newly-built will we set to him there,
And our sacrifices will offer for those eight bronze-mailed heroes who died,
Whom Megara, Kreon's daughter, bare, that mighty Hero's bride—
They unto whom at the sun's down-going the nightlong flame is uplifted,
And with odorous reek its smoke is lashing the welkin, through cloudland
drifted.

(*Ep.* 4)

Then on the second day is holden
The struggle of athlete-might,
The crown of the year's games ended.
There with his brows made bright
With leaves of the myrtle-wreath enfolden
Twin triumphs Melissus blended,
When already among the boys he had won another by heeding diligently
The words of the wisely-counselling tongue [join I
Of the pilot trainer who steered his course: with Melissus Orseas' name
As I shed on them grace of delightsome song.

Isthmian V.

For Phylakidas of Aegina, son of Lampon, and brother of Pytheas (celebrated in the Fifth Nemean), on his victory in the Pankration, B.C. 476 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

Theia of many names, O mother of the Sun,[1]
Men set their stamp on gold for love of thee,
Of all things precious counting this the mightiest one ;
Yea, and in rivalry,
Queen, for thy brightness on the sea do galleys clash in wars,
And in the whirling fight are marvels wrought by battle-cars.

(*Ant.* 1)

He in the contests of the Games achieves renown
Desired of all, who hath won victory's meed
By hands that wreathed his head with many a crown,
Or by his fleet foot's speed.
'Tis Heaven awards each prize of strength : two things alone there be
That make life's loveliest blossoms blow in wealth's flower-spangled lea,

(*Ep.* 1)

To have good hap and reputation fair.
Seek not to be as Zeus ; all things are thine
If to thee falls of these best gifts thy share ;
For mortal bounds must mortal men confine.
But, O Phylakidas, for thee at Isthmus lies in store
A twofold meed of fadeless fame, at Nemea for you twain,
For thee and Pytheas, crowns pankratian. Oh, mine heart no more
Rapture of song can taste, except the Aiakids swell the strain.
Led by the Graces I, by sons of Lampon summoned o'er,

(*Str.* 2)

To this, the city of fair governance, came. If she
To the clear path of deeds that Gods inspire

1. Theia was the Goddess of all brightness, of the heavenly bodies, of gold, the bright metal *par excellence*, and so of wealth in other forms.

Hath turned her steps, grudge not the wine of minstrelsy,
Her valour's glory-hire.
Yea, for in days heroic her brave sons earned glory's crown,
And lyre and flute-notes manifold still peal out their renown

(*Ant.* 2)

Through years past numbering. By Zeus Kronion's grace
A new theme Oineus' mighty sons have found
For bards inspired: Aetolians still with altar-blaze
Worship the world-renowned;
And chariot-speeding Iolaus still is Thebe's pride,
Of Argos Perseus, Leda's sons Eurotas' stream beside.

(*Ep.* 2)

And still Oenone worships the renown
Of Aiakus and his sons high-hearted, they
Who in stern battle sacked the Trojans' town
First, when with Herakles they faced the fray,
Then, with the sons of Atreus:—upward wing, O Muse, thy flight!
Tell who were they before whom Kyknus fell, and Hector died.
Who smote the dauntless chief who led the Aethiop hosts to fight,
Memnon the brazen-mailed? And who, Kaïkus' stream beside,
Met valiant Telephus, and with resistless spear did smite?

(*Str.* 3)

Even they whose home my lips proclaim the glorious isle
Aegina!—that tower builded long ago
For heroism's feet to scale her stately pile.
My tongue's true-aiming bow
Hath many a shaft whose flight shall sing their praise: yea, Aias' state
Can witness how her shipmen's prowess saved from thraldom's fate

(*Ant.* 3)

Salamis in that ruin-tempest heaven-sent,
When slaughter's hailstorm did on myriads fall—
Yet hush, O lips of mine, the vaunt irreverent!
Is not Zeus Lord of all?
He ordereth this and that. These late-won honours gladly hail
Sweet song that hymns the victor's joy. Now, whoso hears the tale

(*Ep.* 3)

Of this Kleonikus' house, e'en let him dare
The athlete-strife! Not dulled is yet the fame
Of their long toils! Nought for the cost they care:
No power hath this their fiery hopes to tame!
Yea, also Pytheas do I praise, who schooled unerringly
His brother's hands to deal the blows whereby Phylakidas bare
To earth the limbs of rivals—ah, a cunning fighter he!
Ho, take for him a crown, and bring the fleecy fillet fair!
With song fresh-pinioned speed him on his path of victory!

Isthmian VI.

For Phylakidas of Aegina, on his victory in the Pankration, B.C. 484 (?) or B.C. 480 (?).

(*Str.* 1)

As they do in a banquet of men when the revelry runneth high,
So do we mingle a second bowl of the Song-queen's strain.
Unto Lampon's athlete-seed do we render honour thereby.
Our first was outpoured to thee, Zeus, in the day that saw us gain
The crown of all crowns at Nemea; the second this day pour we
To the Lord of the Isthmus and Nereus' fifty Maids of the Sea
For the House's youngest scion Phylakidas' victory.
Oh may we make ready a third for the Saviour Olympus' Lord![1]
So may a libation of honey-sweet songs on Aegina be poured!

(*Ant.* 1)

For if one of the sons of men who exults in the cost and the toil
Attain to achievement that shall like a god-built tower stand,
And with Heaven's help plant the seed of renown in a fruitful soil,
God-honoured he casteth his anchor on Fortune's farthest strand.
Unto such desires to attain this son of Kleonymus prays

1. *i.e.*, May the Nemean and Isthmian victories be followed by one at Olympia.

Or ever he cometh with death or with hoar hairs face to face.
And of Klotho enthroned on high this day I implore her grace,
Praying her and her sister Fates propitiously now to draw near
To the heavenward-ringing petition of him that I hold so dear.

(*Ep.* 1)

And you, O Aiakus' sons, upon golden chariots mounted,
I deem it a sacred ordinance laid most clearly on me,
Whensoe'er I set foot on your isle, to shower on you praise ; for uncounted
Highways of five-score feet stretch farther than eye can see
For your noble achievements : they pass to southward beyond Nile's fountains,
And away to the land lying north of where Boreas leaps from his mountains.
No city there is so uncouth of speech, but hath heard the story
Of the blest one, spouse of a Goddess, of hero Peleus' glory,

(*Str.* 2)

And hath heard of Aias Telamon's scion, and Aias' sire.
Him did Alkmena's son, to requite Laomedon's lie,
Lead with his warriors of Tiryns, an ally whose soul was afire
For the joy of the harness of battle, in galleys led him to Troy,
To the land of heroes' travail. So Pergamus-city was laid
In the dust by Herakles' might. Thereafter, with Telamon's aid,
The tribes of the Meropes slew he, against him in battle arrayed,
And the herdman huge as a mountain, Alkyoneus, whom he found
In Phlegra, and spared not his bowstring's thunder-clanging rebound.

(*Ant.* 2)

But when Herakles came to bid to the voyaging Aiakus' son,
Him with his company feasting he found, and as there he stood
In the lion-skin, Telamon called on the son of Amphitryon
The first libation to pour of the cluster's nectar-blood ;
And the chalice rough with the gold embossed with the word did he place
Wine-brimming in Herakles' hands. Thereupon did the hero raise
His hands, the invincible hands, in prayer to the firmament's space ;
And he lifted his voice : ' If ever, O Zeus Allfather, thou
Hast hearkened with willing soul unto prayer of mine, O now

(*Ep.* 2)

With heavenward-soaring prayers unto thee do I make my petition
To perfect in Eriboia's womb for the man at my side
A valiant son, who shall aye be my friend by Fate's decision,
One of thews invincibly stalwart, hard as the lion's hide
That at Nemea, first of my labours, I slew, this fell enfolding
My shoulders, and may his courage be worthy his frame's strong moulding!'
He spake, and a mighty eagle the God sent down from his heaven,
Monarch of birds ; and with rapture thrilled for the omen given

(*Str.* 3)

Herakles lifted his voice, and he spake as speaketh a seer :
' Lo, thou shalt have the son thou desirest, Telamon ;
And after the name of the bird that thou sawest but now appear,
So shalt thou name him, Aias, a world-famed mighty one,
In the battle-toils of thy people a warrior deadly strong.'
So spake he, and sat him down. But for me it were all too long
Of all their achievements to tell. I came, O Queen of Song,
For Phylakidas, Pytheas, Euthymenes, the march to array
Of the triumph-procession, and brief, after Argive wont, be the lay.

(*Ant.* 3)

In Isthmian pankration victories three did they win by their might,
And from leaf-shadowed Nemea yet more triumphs, those glorious boys,
And their mother's brother. How fair a portion of song to the light
Did they bring ! And with brightest dews of refreshing did they rejoice
The Clan of the Psalychidae ; and now have they raised to renown
By their prowess the House of Themistius ; yea, and in this good town
Do they dwell, whereon the Gods with loving eyes look down.
And, honouring Hesiod's words—' Whatsoever he findeth to do,'
That Lampon ' doth with his might,' and exhorteth his sons thereto.

(*Ep.* 3)

So he brings to his city glory, the weal of the whole state serving.
He is loved for his kindness to strangers : the golden mean alway
In purpose, the golden mean in action he follows unswerving.
His tongue is at one with his thoughts. Amid athletes he is, thou
canst say,

As the Naxian stone that in grinding of bronze all other excelleth.
I will give him to drink of Dirke's taintless spring that upwelleth
By the stately-rampired gates of the city of Kadmus, whose waters
Were caused to leap to the light by Memory's deep-zoned daughters.

Isthmian VII.

For Strepsiades of Thebes, on his victory in the Pankration, B.C. 456 (?). The victor's uncle had recently been killed in battle.

(*Str.* 1)

In which of the old-time glories that made thy land renowned
Hath thy spirit, O happy Thebe, delighted most of all ?
When thou sawest the birth of the God of the tresses that toss unbound,
Dionysus, enthroned by Demeter to whom clashed cymbals call ?
Or when thou didst welcome the chief of the Gods at the midnight hour,
What time he descended to earth in a golden-snowing shower,

(*Ant.* 1)

When he stood at Amphitryon's portal, and went in unto the bride
Of Amphitryon, whence sprang god-begotten Herakles ?
Was it when Teiresias' counsels inspired were thy joy and thy pride ?
Was it when thou didst see Iolaus' chariot-masteries,
Or the Sown Men's tireless spears ? Or when from thy fierce war-shout
Thou sentest Adrastus fleeing, bereft of the battle-rout

(*Ep.* 1)

Of his countless comrades, back unto Argos the war-steed land ?
Or when thou didst set the feet of the Dorian Spartans again
Firm in the ancient home, and when by a warrior-band,
Even thy sons of the Aegeid House, was Amyklae ta'en
Because they obeyed the Pythian oracle's command ?
But alas ! it sleepeth, the olden glory,
And mortals forget the heroic story,

(*Str.* 2)

Save only that which attains unto poesy's perfect flower
By reason that it hath been wedded to far-ringing streams of song.

For Strepsiades then lead forth the procession in this glad hour
With strains sweet-rippling. He brings the pankratian meed of the strong
From Isthmus. In strength is he wondrous, and goodly withal to behold ;
Nor his stature is shamed by his valour, his spirit aweless-bold.

(*Ant.* 2)

Glows on him a splendour breathed by the flower-tressed Muses' breath.
A share in his crown to his namesake mother's brother he gave,
For whom Ares the brazen-bucklered mingled the wine of death.
Yet a recompense of renown is laid up in store for the brave ;
For let him be assured—whosoe'er, overgloomed by the cloud of war,
Beats back the hailstorm of blood from his dear land's heart afar,

(*Ep.* 2)

By hurling death through the ranks of the host of his fatherland's foe—
Be assured that he maketh his nation's glory to shine more bright,
Yea, whether he live, or whether the hero in death lie low.
But thou, O scion of Diodotus, in that last fight
With strong Meleager didst vie—yea, as his did thy battle-fire glow !—
And with Hector and Amphiaraus vying
Didst breathe out youth's fair bloom in thy dying

(*Str.* 3)

In the press of the battle, the forefront of fight, where of warriors our chief
Bare up the weight of the struggle of war in hope's despair.
Ah me ! at the woeful tidings I suffered unspeakable grief !
By the Earth-enfolder's grace now calm after storm shines fair.
With garlands enwreathing my locks will I sing this victory.
O may not the triumph be marred by the high Gods' jealousy,

(*Ant.* 3)

As onward I follow to taste the sweetness of this my day,
And peacefully journey to eld and the bourne that Fate doth ordain
For my life. For we all must die : alike are we passing away,
Though our fortune be diverse. How far soever one's gaze may strain,
Too frail is man to attain to the heaven brazen-floored.
Even so did wingèd Pegasus fling his earthly lord,

(*Ep.* 3)

When Bellerophon fain would have winged his flight to the mansions on high,
And have entered the glorious conclave of Gods with Zeus throned there.

Bitter the end is of pleasure attained unlawfully.
But to us, O Loxias, thou with thy glory of golden hair
Ever blooming in youth, do thou with a gift of thy grace draw nigh,
From Pytho's contests on us bestowing
A garland of bright flowers lovely-blowing.

Isthmian VIII.

For Kleandros of Aegina, on his victory in the boys' Pankration, B.C. 478 (?). It was shortly after the battle of Plataea: the poet, while thankful for the liberation of Greece, is filled with sorrow for the traitorous part which his native Thebes has played in that war.

(*Str.* 1)

For Kleandros and his comrades, O ye youths, let some of you
Go and stand before his father Telesarchus' gleaming door,
And wake the chant, the recompense for toils, his glorious due
For the crowns that from the Isthmus and from Nemea he bore.
What though I be stricken-hearted, to their praying have I hearkened,
And on the golden Muse I call. From night of woes that darkened
Around us are we rescued, and we may not brook bereaving
Of triumph-crowns, nor over cureless evils linger grieving.
But let us cheer the people with the sweetness of our song,
Though the pain have scarce departed; for the stone that hung so long
Above our heads—a very stone of Tantalus—at last
A God hath turned aside: the peril now is overpast,

(*Str.* 2)

That intolerable curse unto Hellas! But the night
Of terror hath departed, and the crushing load of care
Is lifted. Yet 'tis better evermore to keep in sight
The perils that be waiting in the path whereon we fare.
For Time is dogging mortals' steps, with treacherous feet on-stealing,
And tangling all the ways of life. Yet even here is healing
For such as have but freedom. Let us still to hope be clinging!
In Thebe seven-gated nursed, the Graces' flowers of singing
I needs must give Aegina; for Asopus' daughters twain
Found favour in the sight of Zeus who over all doth reign.

And one of these by lovely-flowered Dirke's fair demesne
He caused to dwell, to be the chariot-loving city's queen.

(*Str.* 3)

But thee unto Oenopia's isle he bore, and couched with thee.
And there unto the Thunder-crashing Father didst thou bear
A godlike scion, Aiakus, of men most righteous he ;
Yea, even to the Gods in Heaven contention's arbiter
Was he. His hero-sons and children's children war-delighting
With peerless valour met the clanging bronze of warriors fighting ;
And self-controlled they ruled their spirit, even as wisdom taught them.
Now when the Gods in council met, of all this they bethought them,
When Zeus with glory-girt Poseidon in contention strove
For Thetis' hand ; for either God was captive of her love,
And fain would win the fairest ; but impossible it was
That Heaven's eternal counsels should bring such a thing to pass

(*Str.* 4)

Whence once they heard the oracle that spake them Fate's decree.
For Themis wise in counsel in the Gods' assembly told
How that Destiny ordained it that the Lady of the Sea
Should bear a son more mighty than his father, who should hold
In his hand another sceptre more resistless than the levin
Or the trident, were she wedded with any lord of Heaven :—
' Cease to contend ! In marriage to a mortal be she given.
Like Ares' hands her son's shall be where battle's strife is striven,
His speed of foot as lightning-flash ;—but she shall see him die
In war ! I give my counsel that this honour from on high
To Peleus son of Aiakus be granted. All attest
That dweller in Iolkos' plain of mortals holiest.

(*Str.* 5)

Then let our message straight go forth to Cheiron's cave divine,
Nor once again let Nereus' daughter set the leaves of strife
In hands of Gods ; but when the mid-month orbèd moonbeams shine
At eventide, then let her loose her maiden zone, the wife
Most lovely of a hero.' So the Goddess spake, preventing
The ruin-day of Kronos' sons. And they in one consenting

Bent their immortal brows. Nor did her counsel's fruitage wither ;
For told it is that these two Kings in friendship came together
To Thetis' bridal. And the lips of bards have published far
To them that saw it not the mighty prowess in the war
Of young Achilles, how he poured a dusky-crimson stain,
The life-blood of king Telephus, on Mysia's vine-clad plain,

(*Str.* 6)

And bridge-like paved the Atreids' safe return across the sea,
And rescued Helen ; for he hewed asunder with his spear
Troy's sinews, them who strove to stay the slaughter-work that he
Wrought in that battle-harried plain, yea, stayed the proud career
Of Memnon's might, of Hector and the chiefs in strength excelling
Of Troy, to whom Achilles showed to Queen Persephone's dwelling
The path—the Aiakids' champion he !—and glory so was bringing
Unto Aegina and his race. Yea, lips immortal singing
Wailed o'er him dead, when Helicon s Maids, a many-voicèd choir,
Stood by his death-rites, pouring forth their dirge around the pyre.
Ay, so the Immortals willed that heroism, even in death,
Should be a theme for Goddesses to hymn with praising breath.

(*Str.* 7)

Yea, to this day that law of honour holds : the Muses' car
Speeds on to sound his glory forth who won the gauntlet-fight
In Isthmus' glade, even Nikokles.[1] Oh, peal his praise afar
Who won the Dorian parsley-crown, who vanquished by his might,
He too,[2] all rivals, hurled them back with leap as of a lion.
Nor him dishonoureth now his father's noble brother's scion.
Twine then, ye comrades of the victor, twine the tender greenness
Of myrtle for his brows ! Alkathous' contest hailed his keenness
Of courage with fair fortune. Yea, with welcoming acclaim
The sons of Epidaurus met him. Meet it is the fame
Of such be sung by good men ; for he hid not from the light,
As in oblivion's pit, the splendour of his youthful might.

1. Uncle of the victor Kleandros.
2. Like Achilles,

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